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THE DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

MOLIÈRE

B1637

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH

By HENRI VAN LAUN

WITH A PREFATORY MEMOIR, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, APPENDICES AND NOTES

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MÉLICERTE,

COMÉDIE PASTORALE HÉROÏQUE.

MÉLICERTE,

A HEROIC PASTORAL IN TWO ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)

DECEMBER 2ND, 1666.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

On the 1st of December 1666, the troupe of Molière set out for Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where it was employed, as well as the troupe of the hôtel de Bourgogne, and the Italian and Spanish comedians, in the *Ballet des Muses*, which inaugurated the renewal of the court-festivals, interrupted for nearly a year through the death of the Queen-mother. The celebrated musician, Lulli, composed the music for the ballet; whilst the King, Madame,[1]—Mesdemoiselles de la Vallière and de La Mothe, Mesdames de Montespan and de Ludre—four ladies whom the King delighted to honour—and the principal personages of the court, took an active part in the entries,[2] the dancing, and the mythological sports.

Molière was entrusted with the task of writing a comedy for these entertainments, and he chose for his subject a similar one to the history of Florizel and Perdita, in Shakspeare's *Winter's Tale*. It is said that Molière owed this episode of *Mélicerte* to that part of Mademoiselle de Scudéry's novel *Cyrus*, which relates the love-scenes between Sésostris and Timarète, a young shepherd and shepherdess, who became enamoured of each other, and are afterwards proved to be of noble origin. But the charm of his writing, the exquisite delicacy of the sentiment, and the freshness of the pastoral scenes, cause us to regret that Molière wrote only the two first acts of this play, and never finished it. Those who wish to study Molière, and not to leave any of his writings neglected, will discover in some of his most slighted plays, such as *Don Garcia of Navarre*, *The Princess of Elis*, *Mélicerte*, *The Magnificent Lovers*, an under-current of sentimentality, sometimes a little too courtly, at other times of rather too pastoral and lackadaisical a flavour, but always bearing the impress of genuine, real, heartfelt emotion, worthy of being carefully observed, as perhaps a new trait in Molière's character.

Mélicerte was acted on the 2d of December 1666, and young Michel Boiron, better known as Baron, played in it the chief character of Myrtil. Tradition states, that, during the rehearsals, the wife of Molière, jealous of the influence of the young actor—for he was only thirteen years old—over the heart of her husband, boxed Baron's ears; at which the latter was so offended that he refused to play. The matter

[1] See Vol. II., page 141, note 1.

[2] See Vol. I., page xxix., note 13.

was arranged with great difficulty; but immediately after *Mélicerte* had been performed, Baron asked Louis XIV.'s permission to leave Molière's troupe, and for three years remained in the provinces. The scandalous gossip of those times says that Mad. Molière's hatred of Baron changed afterwards into a warmer sentiment, which he returned.

This play was not published during Molière's lifetime, but sixteen years after his death by La Grange and Vinot. (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. II., page 287.) In 1699, seventeen years after it had been published, Guérin, a son of the husband of Molière's widow, and who professed a great admiration for Molière, altered *Mélicerte* partly, changed the metre into an irregular one, made Myrtil give to Mélicerte a nosegay instead of a bird, and added an entire third act. But in spite of the music of Lalande and the protection of the Princess of Conti, the piece had no success.

Molière and his troupe remained at Saint Germain-en-Laye from the 1st of December 1666, until the 25th of February 1667, and received from the King, for the time spent in his pleasures, two years of their pension.[3] During that time, the dramatist produced *Mélicerte*, the *Pastorale Comique*, and *The Sicilian*. The *Ballet des Muses* was arranged by Benserade, the official manager of nearly all the courtly entertainments, who wrote also the verses or *récits*;[4] but as this *Ballet* lasted for nearly three months, it must have been often changed, for variety is one of the necessities of courtly amusements. It opened with Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, who, remembering the great heroes of antiquity, wished to see the august prince who had such a glorious reputation, and who caused all arts to flourish in his dominions. She was accompanied by the nine Muses who sang, and by seven arts. Urania, and seven planets, represented by dancers in brilliant dresses, formed the first entry. The second entry was Pyramus and Thisbe; Pyramus was acted by the Count of Armagnac, generally called Monsieur le Grand, because he was "Grand Écuyer" (Master of the horse), and Thisbe by the Marquis de Mirepoix, who we sincerely trust played better than Nick Bottom, the weaver, and Francis Flute, the bellows-mender. The third entry was Thalia and Mélicerte,[5] represented by Molière and his troupe, "of all our poets," says the official description, "the one who, in this kind of writing, may with the greatest justice be compared to the ancients." The fourth entry was in honour of Euterpe, a pastoral muse; eight shepherds and eight shepherdesses sang some verses in praise of the power of Love; four other shepherds and

[3] The munificence displayed by Louis XIV. to Molière and his troupe has been too much extolled. Since the year 1665, they received 6000 livres, and during the last two years of Molière's life, 7000 livres; but the troupe of the hôtel de Bourgogne received 12,000 livres, and the Italian troupe 15,000 livres yearly.

[4] See Vol. I., page xxix., note 13.

[5] There is a little doubt whether *Mélicerte* or the *Pastorale Comique* was represented in the third entry; most probably the former.

four other shepherdesses danced, whilst the sixteen were singing. Amongst the dancers were Louis XIV. and the Marquis de Villeroi, and amongst the *danseuses* Madame, Madame de Montespan, Mademoiselle de La Vallière and Mademoiselle de Toussi. The fifth entry, in honour of Clio, the muse of history, was a ballet representing the battle between Alexander and Porus. I cannot imagine that the battle was well represented; for the official description gives only the names of five Greeks and the same number of Indians, while each army has one drummer and two flute players. The sixth entry, in honour of Calliope, "the mother of fine verses," was a little comedy, called *The Poets*, acted by the troupe of the hôtel de Bourgogne, when a Spanish Mascarade was represented, in which the King and several noblemen, as well as Madame, Madame de Montespan, Mademoiselle de La Vallière, and several noble ladies, danced. There were also four Spaniards who played on the harp and guitar, the same number who sang, and four Spanish ladies who sang also; and if these Spanish actors were—as is most likely—the comedians patronised by the Queen Maria Theresa, herself a Spanish princess, and on the point of giving birth to a child,[6] it is, to say the least of it, singular, that they should have sung in her presence, as well as in that of the King's favourites, verses which say, "the most charming youth, without love, is nothing; some little tenderness increases all charms. None can refrain from the power of love, but if my heart is tender, it is not so for you." In the seventh entry, Orpheus, sung by Lulli, was represented as bewailing and feeling the influence of love; a nymph and eight Thracians are also there. The eighth entry represented Erato, "who, above all others, is invoked in love," and six lovers taken from the most famous novels; amongst others, Louis XIV., came forward as Cyrus. The ninth entry was in honour of Polyhymnia, "whose power extends over eloquence and dialectics;" three Greek and three Roman orators are ridiculed by the same number of French and Italian actors. The tenth entry was in honour of Terpsichore, "to whom the invention of rustic song and dances is attributed;" four Fauns and four savage women dance, and a Satyr sings verses, of course, in praise of Love. The eleventh entry consisted of the nine Muses and the nine daughters of Pierro vieing with each other in dancing, and all represented by noble ladies, amongst whom were Madame, Mademoiselle de La Vallière, Madame de Ludre, and Madame de Montespan. The twelfth entry was composed of three nymphs, who were umpires, of which the King was one. The last entry consisted of the Pierides resisting, and Monsieur Le Grand, as Jupiter, changing them into birds.

It will be seen that the *Grand Monarque* danced several times himself in the *Ballet des Muses;* he always liked dancing, and however much his early education may have been neglected, upon that point it left

[6] This child, a girl, was born on the 2d of January, 1667.

nothing to be desired. But to judge rightly how much dancing was esteemed at that time, we have but to look at what was paid to the King's different masters in 1660—he was then twenty-three years old. We find that the yearly salary of his dancing master was 2000 livres, of his drawing master 1500 livres, and of his writing master 300 livres, the same, in fact, as that of the scullions of the royal kitchen—perhaps a just retribution for neglect, for Louis XIV. wrote a royally bad hand all his lifetime, but was considered a first-rate dancer. He instituted in 1661, an *Académie royale de danse*, formed of thirteen dancing masters, who "shall have to remedy the disorders and confusion which the late wars have introduced in the aforesaid art," says the official preamble. This Academy enjoyed the same privileges as the *Académie de peinture et de sculpture;* and probably the dancing master of *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, was one of its members. The official *Gazette* always gave a minute and detailed report of the most trifling mythological or allegorical ballet danced at court, but never an analysis of any masterpiece of the French stage. It continued to do this, even after the King no longer danced himself.[7]

[7] It is generally stated that Louis XIV. never danced more in a ballet, after Racine had put the following words in the mouth of Burrhus, in the tragedy of *Britannicus*, represented during the latter part of the year 1669. We see, however, that the King, according to the *Gazette*, represented Apollo and Neptune in a ballet, on the 9th of February 1670; but after that time, he never more appeared in public. The lines are as follows:—

"His greatest merit and his rarest virtue,
Is skilfully to guide his chariot's course,
To vie with others for unworthy prizes,
And to become a public sight in Rome."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MYRTIL, *in love with Mélicerte.*
ACANTHE, *in love with Daphné.*
TYRÈNE, *in love with Eroxène.*
LYCARSIS, *herdsman, supposed father to Myrtil.*[8]
NICANDRE, *shepherd.*
MOPSE, *shæpherd, supposed uncle to Mélicerte.*
MÉLICERTE, *shepherdess.*
DAPHNÉ, *shepherdess.*
ÉROXÈNE, *shepherdess.*
CORINNE, *confidante of Mélicerte.*

Scene—THESSALY, IN THE VALLEY OF TEMPE.

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8 This part was played by Molière himself.

MÉLICERTE.

(*MÉLICERTE.*)

ACT I. SCENE I.

DAPHNÉ, ÉROXÈNE, ACANTHE, TYRÈNE.

Acan. Ah! charming Daphné!

Tyr. Too lovely Eroxène!

Daph. Leave me, Acanthe.

Erox. Do not follow me, Tyrène.

Acan. [*To Daphné*] Why do you drive me away?

Tyr. [*To Eroxène*] Why do you fly from me?

Daph. [*To Acanthe*] You please me most when far away.

Erox. [*To Tyrène*] I love to be where you are not.

Acan. Why not cease this killing severity?

Tyr. Why not cease to be so cruel?

Daph. Why not cease your useless protestations?

Erox. Why not cease to bore me?

Acan. I die with grief, unless you pity them.

Tyr. Unless you succour me, my death is but too sure.

Daph. Unless you go, I leave this place.

Erox. If you remain, I say good-bye.

Acan. Well, be it so! to please you I will go.

Tyr. When I am gone, I am sure you will be pleased.

Acan. Generous Eroxène, vouchsafe, for pity's sake, to say a word or two to her in favour of my passion.

Tyr. Obliging Daphné, speak to this inhuman creature, and learn whence proceeds so much hatred towards me.

SCENE II.

DAPHNÉ, ÉROXÈNE.

Erox. Acanthe has some merit, and loves you dearly. How is it that you treat him so harshly ?

Daph. Tyrène has much worth, and pines for your love. Whence comes it that, without pity, you behold him shedding tears ?

Erox. Since I put the question first, it is but fair that you should answer before me.

Daph. All Acanthe's attentions make no impression on me, because I care for some one else.

Erox. I treat Tyrène with harshness, because another is master of my heart.

Daph. May I know this choice which you conceal ?

Erox. Yes, if you tell me this secret of yours.

Daph. I can easily satisfy your wish without telling you the name of him I love. I have an admirable portrait of him in my pocket, the work of Atis, that inimitable painter, so like him in every feature, that I am sure you will recognise him at a glance.

Erox. I can satisfy you by the same means, and repay your secret in the like coin. I also have a lovely portrait by this famous painter, of the object of my affections, so like him in every feature, and in his exceeding grace, that you will name him at first sight.

Daph. The case which the painter has had made for me is exactly like yours.

Erox. It is true. They are exactly alike, and certainly Atis must have had them made together.

Daph. Let us now, by means of these few tints, show each other the secret of our hearts.

Erox. Let us see who will soonest understand this language, and which work speaks most plainly.

Daph. This is a droll mistake, and you have made a nice blunder: instead of your portrait, you have given me back my own.

Erox. Indeed I have; I do not know how I came to do it.

Daph. Give it me. It is because you were dreaming.

Erox. What is the meaning of this. I believe we are joking with each other. You have made the same blunder as I have with the portraits.

Daph. This is certainly enough to make one laugh. Give it me back again.

Erox. [*Placing the two portraits side by side*] This is the true way not to make a blunder.

Daph. Is this an illusion of my preoccupied senses?

Erox. Is my mind affecting my eyes?

Daph. Myrtil is shown to me in this work.

Erox. Of Myrtil's features I see the image.

Daph. It is young Myrtil who has kindled my flame.

Erox. It is to young Myrtil that all my wishes tend.

Daph. I came to-day to entreat you to tell him how his merits interest me in his lot.

Erox. I came to ask you to assist me in my affections; to help me to gain his heart.

Daph. Is this affection with which he inspires you so powerful?

Erox. Is your love for him so violent?

Daph. He could inflame the coldest heart; and his budding charms must delight everyone.

Erox. Not a nymph, but would esteem herself happy in loving him. Diana herself might without shame be enamoured of him.

Daph. Nothing but his bright presence charms me now-a-days; and had I a hundred hearts, they should all be his.

Erox. He blots every other sight from my eyes; and had I a sceptre he should be master of it.

Daph. It would be useless, then, to try to tear this love from our breasts. Our hearts are too steadfast in their wishes. Only let us try, if possible, to remain friends; and since we both have formed the same designs for the same youth, let us act with the utmost candour in this matter, and not take a mean advantage of each other. Let us hasten together to Lycarsis, and confide to him our tender feelings for his son.

Erox. I can hardly conceive, so great is my surprise, how such a son could spring from such a father. His shape, his mien, his words, his eyes, all make you believe that the blood of the gods runs in his veins. But I consent, let us go and find the father. Let us open our hearts to him, and agree that Myrtil shall decide by his own choice afterwards this contest of our desires.

Daph. Be it so. I perceive Lycarsis with Mopse and Nicandre. They will leave him perhaps. Let us hide ourselves till they do.

SCENE III.

LYCARSIS, MOPSE, NICANDRE.

Nic. [*To Lycarsis*] Tell us your news?

Lyc. Ah! how you press me! It does not do to tell these things as you imagine.

Mop. What silly ceremonies, and what tomfoolery! Menalcus does not make more to sing.

Lyc. Amongst the busy-bodies in political matters, the divulging of news generally causes a great stir. I wish to be considered as rather a man of importance, and enjoy your impatience a little longer.

Nic. Do you wish to tire us both by your delay?

Mop. Do you take pleasure in making yourself a bore ?

Nic. Prithee, speak out, and stop these grimaces.

Lyc. Ask me both in a decent manner, and tell me what you will give me if I do as you wish.

Mop. Plague take the fool ! Let us leave him, Nicandre. He is more anxious to tell than we are to hear. His news weighs him down, he wishes to get rid of it, and we will just vex him by not listening.

Lyc. Eh !

Nic. It serves you right for your ado.

Lyc. I will tell it you, listen.

Mop. Not at all.

Lyc. What ! you do not wish to hear me ?

Nic. No.

Lyc. Very well. I will not say a word, and you shall know nothing.

Mop. All right.

Lyc. You shall not know, then, that the King has come to honour Tempe with his presence in the most magnificent style ; and that he made his entry into Larissa yesterday afternoon ; and that I saw him there comfortably installed with the whole Court ; that these woods will be rejoiced to-day at the sight of him ; and that there are a great many rumours abroad in connection with his visit.[9]

Nic. We do not wish to know anything.

Lyc. I have seen a hundred things there, delightful to behold. Nothing but great lords, glittering and brilliant from head to foot, as if dressed for a holiday ; they astonish one's eyes ; and are more dazzling than our meadows at spring-time with all their flowers. As for the prince himself, he is

[9] Molière has also employed in *George Dandin* a talkative servant named Lubin, who tells his secret, after having said that his hearer should know nothing.

easily known among all the rest; he looks like a grand monarch a mile off.[10] There is a something about him that makes you tell at once that he is a master King. He performs his part with matchless grace; and to say the truth, it suits him admirably. You would hardly believe how every one at court eagerly watches for a glance; there reigns around him a pleasant confusion; and one would think it a swarm of brilliant insects following everywhere a sweet honeycomb. In short, I have seen nothing so lovely under the canopy of Heaven; and our much cherished feast of Pan is a mere piece of trash compared with this spectacle. Since you seem so proud, I keep my news to myself, and shall tell nothing.

Mop. And we do not in the least wish to hear you.

Lyc. Go to the right about.

Mop. Go and hang yourself.

SCENE IV.

ÉROXÈNE, DAPHNÉ, LYCARSIS.

Lyc. [*Believing himself alone*] That is the way to punish people when they are foolish and impertinent.

Daph. Heaven always preserve your flock, shepherd!

Erox. May Ceres always keep your barns full of corn.

Lyc. And may the great Pan give to each of you a husband, who will love you much and be worthy of you!

Daph. Ah, Lycarsis! our wishes tend to the same end.

Erox. Both our hearts sigh for the same object.

Daph. And that boy Cupid, the cause of all our languor,

---

[10] This was intended as a compliment to Louis XIV. The original has *Et d'une stade loin il sent son grand monarque.* Of course, Moliere did not intend to insinuate anything: yet it is rather funny that he should use the words *il sent*, 'he smells,' considering the uncleanly personal habits of Louis XIV., and his intense dislike to ablutions, as mentioned by Saint Simon in his *Mémoires.*

has borrowed from you the darts with which he wounds our hearts.

Erox. And we have come here to seek your countenance, and to see which of us two shall have the preference.

Lyc. Nymphs. . . .

Daph. For this alone we sigh.

Lyc. I am. . . .

Erox. For this happiness only we wish.

Daph. We express our thoughts somewhat freely.

Lyc. Why so ?

Erox. Good breeding seems somewhat outraged.

Lyc. Not at all !

Daph. But when the heart is consumed with a noble flame, one may, without any shame, make a candid avowal of it.

Lyc. I. . . .

Erox. We may be allowed this freedom, and the beauty of our hearts' choice warrants it.

Lyc. You shock my modesty by flattering me thus.

Erox. No, no ; affect no modesty in this case.

Daph. In short, all our happiness is in your keeping.

Erox. Our only hope depends on you.

Daph. Shall we find any difficulties in you ?

Lyc. Ah !

Erox. Tell me, shall our wishes be rejected ?

Lyc. No. Heaven has given me no cruel heart. I take after my late wife ; and I feel, like her, a great sympathy with the desires of others. And I am not the man to show much pride.[11]

Daph. Then grant us Myrtil to our ardent love.

---

[11] Auger, one of the commentators of Molière, thinks that the wife of Lycarsis was mentioned here on purpose, because it was probably the intention of Molière afterwards to explain how Myrtil had passed so long for Lycarsis' son.

Erox. And allow his choice to adjust our quarrel.

Lyc. Myrtil?

Daph. Yes, it is Myrtil whom we desire of you.

Erox. Of whom did you think we were speaking?

Lyc. I do not know; but Myrtil is not of an age to take the yoke of matrimony upon himself.

Daph. His growing merit may strike other eyes; and we wish to secure so precious a possession, to forestall others, and to brave fortune under the firm ties of a common bond.

Erox. As by his wit and other brilliant qualities, he is out of the common order, and outstrips time; so shall our affection for him do the same, and regulate all his wishes according to his exceeding merit.

Lyc. It is true that for his age he sometimes surprises me; and that this Athenian, who stayed with me for twenty months, finding him so handsome, took a fancy to fill his mind with his philosophy. He has made him so clever upon certain subjects, that, great as I am, he often puzzles me. But, after all, he is still a child, and his knowledge is mixed with a great deal of innocence.

Daph. He is not such a child but that I, who see him every day, believe him somewhat love-sick already; and I have noticed many a thing that shows that he is after young Mélicerte.

Erox. They may be in love with each other, and I can see. . . .

Lyc. Nonsense. As for her, I do not say, she is two years older than he, and two years with her sex means a great deal. But as for him, he dreams of nothing but play, I think, and of his little vanities of being dressed like the shepherds of lofty rank.

Daph. In short, we wish, by the marriage tie to attach his fortune to ours.

Erox. We are both equally eager to assure ourselves before-hand of the mastery of his heart.

Lyc. I feel myself more honoured than you would think. I am but a poor herdsman; and it is certainly too much glory that two nymphs of the highest rank in the land should contend for making my son their husband. Since he pleases you so much, let the matter be arranged in this way. I consent that his choice shall adjust your dispute; and she, whom his decree shall set aside, may marry me in compensation, if she likes. At all events, it is the same blood, and almost the same thing. But here he is. Allow me to prepare him a little. He has some sparrow newly caught: and this is nearly all his love and attachment.

SCENE V.

ÉROXÈNE, DAPHNÉ, *and* LYCARSIS (*at the further end of the stage*), MYRTIL.

Myr. [*Believing himself alone, carrying a sparrow in a cage*] Innocent little bird, that thus, before me, beat your wings so violently against your prison walls, bewail not your loss of freedom. Yours is a glorious fate. I have caught you for Mélicerte. She will kiss you, and take you in her hands, and grant you the favour of nestling in her bosom. Can there be a sweeter and happier lot? Oh, happy little sparrow, where is the King that would not change places with you?

Lyc. A word with you, Myrtil. Leave these playthings alone. It is a question of something else than sparrows. These two nymphs, Myrtil, lay claim to you at the same time, and young as you are, desire you for their husband. I am to secure you to them by marriage; and they wish you to choose one of them.

Myr. These nymphs?

Lyc. Yes. Of the two you must select one. Look at the happiness in store for you, and bless your good fortune.

Myr. Can this proffered choice be deemed happiness, if my heart does not in the least wish for it?

Lyc. At least, acknowledge it; and respond properly, and without confusion, to the honour intended for you.

Erox. Behold, Myrtil, notwithstanding the pride which reigns amongst us, two nymphs who offer themselves to you. The marvellous promise of your worth reverses the order of things in this case.

Daph. We leave you, Myrtil, as the best judge, in this matter, to consult your own eyes and heart: nor will we influence your choice by a flowery description of our own perfections.

Myr. You intend me an honour the greatness of which dazzles me; but I confess that this honour is too great for me. I must oppose your exceeding goodness; I am of too little worth to deserve such fortune; and however great its attractions might be, I should be sorry that, for my sake, you should be blamed for having chosen beneath you.

Erox. Comply with our wishes whatever may be said of it, and do not trouble yourself with the care of our glory.

Daph. No, do not think so humbly of yourself, and leave us to be the judges of your deserts.

Myr. Even the proffered choice opposes itself to your expectations, and alone would prevent my heart from satisfying you. How am I to choose between two great beauties, equal in birth and rare perfections? To reject either would be a terrible crime, and it is much more reasonable to choose neither.

Erox. But in refusing to comply with our desires, instead of one, you offend two, Myrtil.

Daph. Since we are willing to abide by your decision, you cannot defend yourself with these reasons.

Myr. Well then! if these reasons do not satisfy you, this one will: I love other charms, and I feel full well, that a heart, which a beautiful object engrosses, is indifferent and deaf to all other advantages.

Lyc. What now! What means all this? Who could have thought it? And do you know, boy, what love is?

Myr. Without knowing it myself, my heart does.

Lyc. But this love displeases me, and is not wanted.

Myr. If it displeases you, you ought not to have given me such a tender and sensitive heart.

Lyc. But this heart that I have given you owes me obedience.

Myr. Yes, when it is in its power to obey.

Lyc. But it ought not to love without my leave.

Myr. Why did you not hinder it, then, from being charmed?

Lyc. Well! I forbid you to let this continue.

Myr. I am afraid your prohibition comes too late.

Lyc. What! has not a father superior rights?

Myr. Even the much greater gods cannot control our hearts.

Lyc. The gods . . . Peace, little fool. This philosophy makes me . . .

Daph. Do not be angry, pray.

Lyc. No: he shall choose one of you, or I will whip him before your faces. Ha, ha, I will let you know that I am your father.

Daph. Pray, let us manage matters without anger.

Erox. May we inquire of you, Myrtil, the name of the charming object whose beauty has made you her swain?

Myr. Mélicerte, Madam. She may make others love her.

Erox. Do you compare her attractions to ours, Myrtil?

Daph. The choice between her and us is unequal enough.

Myr. Nymphs, in Heaven's name, do not say any ill of her. Pray consider that I love her, and do not upset my mind. If, by loving her, I outrage your heavenly charms, she has no part in that crime; all the offence comes from me, if you please. It is true that I know the difference between you and her; but we cannot escape our fate. In short, Nymphs, I feel that Heaven has granted me all imaginable respect for you, but for her all the love of which a heart is capable. I perceive, by the blush that rises in your face, that my words do not please you. My heart fears to hear in your answer what may wound it in its most tender part; and to avoid such a blow, I prefer taking my leave of you, Nymphs.

Lyc. Hullo, Myrtil, hullo! Will you come back, you wretch? He is off; but we shall see who is master. Do not concern yourself about all these idle raptures; you shall have him for a husband, I answer with my life for that.

ACT II. SCENE I.

MÉLICERTE, CORINNE.

Mél. Ah! Corinne, you have heard it from Stella, and she has got the news from Lycarsis?

Cor. Yes.

Mél. That Myrtil's charms have touched the hearts of Éroxène and Daphné?

Cor. Yes.

Mél. That they are so eager to secure him, that both together have asked for his hand, and that, in their discussion, they have decided to claim it this very hour? How

unwilling you are to speak ! and how little my misfortune touches you !

Cor. But what would you have me say ? This is the truth, and you repeat every word exactly as I told them to you.[12]

Mél. But how does Lycarsis take this matter ?

Cor. As an honour, I believe, that ought to please him mightily.

Mél. And do not you see, you who know my feelings so well, that, alas ! with these words you pierce me to the heart ?

Cor. How so ?

Mél. By showing me thus plainly that implacable fate makes me of so little consequence as compared with them. Is not the thought, that they will be preferred to me, on account of their rank, enough to drive me mad ?

Cor. But I only answer and say what I think.

Mél. Oh ! you kill me with your indifference. But tell me, what feelings did Myrtil show ?

Cor. I know not.

Mél. That is just what you ought to know, cruel girl !

Cor. In truth I do not know what to do. Whatever I do, I am sure to displease you.

Mél. It is because you do not enter into the feelings of a heart too full, alas ! of tender passion. Go : Leave me alone in this solitude to pass a few moments of my anxiety.

SCENE II.

MÉLICERTE, *alone.*

Behold, my heart, what it is to love. Too well Bélise warned me of it. That darling mother, before her death,

[12] This coolness of the confidant, as opposed to the impatience of the loved one, is also found in *The Rogueries of Scapin* (See Vol. VI.), when in the first Scene of the first Act, Octave repeats the words which his servant Sylvestre utters.

said to me, one day on the banks of the Peneus, "Beware, daughter; Love always comes to young hearts surrounded by sweet guiles. At first it offers nought but what is agreeable; but it drags horrible troubles after it; and if you wish to pass your days in peace, ever defend yourself from its darts, as from an evil." And Oh! my heart, well did I remember those lessons, and when first I beheld Myrtil, when he played with me, and paid me attentions, I always told you to delight less in them. But you believed me not; and your complacency soon changed into too much goodwill. You imagined nought but joy and pleasure from this budding love that flattered your desires. Now you behold the cruel misfortune with which fate threatens you in this ominous day, and the deadly pangs to which it reduces you. Ah my heart! my heart! I warned you. But let us, if we can, conceal our grief. Here comes . . .

SCENE III.

MYRTIL, MÉLICERTE.

Myr. I just now, charming Mélicerte, took a little prisoner, which I have kept for you, and of which I may perhaps become jealous one of these days. It is a young sparrow, which I myself intend to tame with great care, and for your acceptance. The present is not great; but the gods themselves take note of the will only. The intention is everything; and it is never the value of presents that . . . But, Heaven, whence this sadness? What ails you, Mélicerte, and what dark sorrow is reflected in your dear eyes this morning? You do not answer me; and this mournful silence redoubles my anxiety and impatience. Speak, what has annoyed you? What is it?

Mél. It is nothing.

Myr. It is nothing, you say, and yet I see your eyes full

of tears. Does this agree, fair charmer? Oh, do not kill me by concealing it, but explain to me what those tears mean.

Mél. It would do me no good to let you know this secret.

Myr. Ought you to have anything that I may not know? Do you not offend this day our loves by wishing to rob me of my share of your troubles? Oh! do not hide it from my affection.

Mél. Well! Myrtil, be it so. I must tell it you, then. I have been informed that, by a choice very glorious for you, Éroxène and Daphné wish you for their husband; and I will confess, Myrtil, that I have the weakness of not being able to hear this without grief; without accusing fate of her rigorous law, which renders their desires preferable to mine.

Myr. And you can harbour this unjust grief! You can suspect my love of weakness, and you imagine that, bound by such sweet charms, I could ever be another's! that I would accept any other proffered hand! Ah! what have I done, cruel Mélicerte, that you treat my tenderness so harshly, and judge my heart so badly? What! ought you even to doubt it? It makes me very wretched to suffer this suspicion. What is the good of love like mine, alas! when you are so ready to disbelieve it?

Mél. I would fear these rivals less, Myrtil, if things were equal on both sides; and were I of similar rank, I might dare to hope that perhaps love would prefer me. But the inequality of wealth and birth, which makes the difference between them and me . . .

Myr. Ah! their rank will not conquer my heart, and your divine charms stand you instead of all. I love you: that is sufficient; and in you I see rank, wealth, treasures, states, sceptre, crown. Were the greatest monarch's power offered to me, I would not change it for the bliss of possessing you. This is the sincere and unvarnished truth, which to doubt is an insult to me.

Mél. Well! Myrtil, since you wish it, I believe that your vows are not shaken by their rank; and that, notwithstanding their nobility, riches, and beauty, your heart loves me well enough to love me better than them. But you will not follow the voice of love. Your father, Myrtil, will dictate your choice, and I am not dear to him, as I am to you, that he should prefer a simple shepherdess to aught else.

Myr. No, dear Mélicerte, neither father nor gods shall force me to discard your lovely eyes; for ever, queen of my heart, as you are . . .

Mél. Ah, Myrtil, take care what you are doing. Do not indulge my heart with hope, which it would perhaps too willingly receive, and which, vanishing afterwards like a passing flash of lightning, would render my misfortune the more cruel.

Myr. What! Am I to invoke the aid of oaths, when I promise to love you for ever? How you wrong yourself by such alarms! How little you know the power of your charms! Well! since you wish it, I swear by the gods; and, if that be not enough, I swear by your eyes, that I shall sooner be killed than leave you. Accept here on the spot the pledge which I give you, and suffer my lips to seal the oath with transport on this fair hand.

Mél. Ah! Myrtil, get up for fear you may be seen.

Myr. Is there aught . . . But, oh Heavens, some one comes to disturb my bliss.

SCENE IV.

LYCARSIS, MYRTIL, MÉLICERTE.

Lyc. Do not let me disturb you.

Mél. [*Aside*] Cruel fate!

Lyc. Not at all bad, this! go on you two. Bless my heart, dear son, how tender you look, and how like a master you

set about it already! Has this sage, whom Athens exiled, taught you all these pretty things in his philosophy? And you, my gentle shepherdess, who so sweetly give him your hand to kiss, does honour teach you these tender wiles wherewith you thus debauch young hearts?

Myr. Refrain from these degrading insinuations, and do not pain me with a discourse that insults her.

Lyc. I will speak to her, I will. All this billing and cooing . . .

Myr. I will not allow her to be abused. My birth obliges me to have some respect for you; but I shall be able to punish you, upon myself, for this outrage. Yes, I call Heaven to witness, that if, against my wishes, you utter again to her the least harsh word, I shall with this sword give her satisfaction. My pierced heart shall be your punishment, and my spilled blood promptly convince her how highly I disapprove of your anger.

Mél. No, no; do not believe that I purposely inflame him, and that it is my design to seduce his heart. It is by his own free will that he cares to see me, and bears me some goodwill; I do not force him. Not that I wish to refrain from responding to his tender passion by an equally tender one. I love him, I own it, as much as possible; but this attachment has nothing that ought to alarm you. And to disarm all your unjust fears, I promise you now to avoid his presence, to make room for the choice you have resolved upon, and not to listen to his protestations of love unless you wish it.

SCENE V.

LYCARSIS, MYRTIL.

Myr. Well! now she is gone, you triumph. She has spoken, and you have obtained all that you desire. But

know that you rejoice in vain, and that you will be disappointed in your expectations; and that, do what you will, all your power shall not shake my determination.

Lyc. What presumption is this, sirrah? Is this the way to talk to me?

Myr. Yes, I am wrong, it is true: and my anger is not seemly. I will change my tone, as becomes me; and I beseech you, father, in the name of the gods, and by all that can be most dear to you, not to use in this conjuncture the supreme power which nature gives you over me. Do not embitter your most precious gifts. I owe my being to you; but shall I be indebted to you this day if you render life unbearable to me?[13] Without Mélicerte, it becomes a torment; nothing is of value to me without her divine charms. They contain all my happiness and all my desires, and if you take them away, you take life itself.

Lyc. [*Aside*] He makes me share his heart-felt grief. Who would have ever thought it of the little rogue? What passion! what excitement! what talk for one of his age! It quite confuses me, and I feel that I am interested in his love.

Myr. [*Throwing himself at Lycarsis' knees*] Say, will you condemn me to die? You have but to speak: I am ready to obey.

Lyc. [*Aside*] I can hold out no longer: he draws tears from me, and his tender words make me yield.

Myr. If in your heart a spark of friendship inspires you with the slightest pity for my fate, grant Mélicerte to my ardent desire, and you will give me more than life.

Lyc. Get up.

Myr. Will you take pity on my sighs?

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[13] Nearly these very words are used by Marianne, when she endeavours to soften the heart of her father, Orgon, in the third Scene of the fourth Act of *Tartuffe*.

Lyc. Yes.

Myr. Shall I obtain the object of my desires?

Lyc. Yes.

Myr. You will make her uncle give me her hand?

Lyc. Yes, get up, I tell you.

Myr. Oh! best of fathers, let me kiss your hands after so much kindness.

Lyc. Ah! how weak a father is for his children! Can we refuse aught to their tender words? Do we not feel some sweet emotions within us, when we reflect that they are part of ourselves?

Myr. But will you keep your given promise? Tell me that you will not change your mind.

Lyc. No.

Myr. If any one should make you change your feelings, have I your leave to disobey you? Say!

Lyc. Yes. Ah, Nature! Nature! I will go and see Mopse, and acquaint him with the love his niece and you have for each other.

Myr. How much I owe to your exceeding kindness. [*Alone*] What happy news to tell Mélicerte! I would not accept a crown in exchange for the pleasure of telling her this marvellous success that will please her so much.

SCENE VI.

ACANTHE, TYRÈNE, MYRTIL.

Acan. Ah, Myrtil, the charms which you have received from Heaven are the cause of tears in us; their dawning beauty, so fatal to our desires, robs us of the hearts of those we love.

Tyr. May we inquire, Myrtil, which of those two fair ones you will choose, of which there is so much talk? and

upon which of us two the blow is to fall that shatters all our expectant affections ?

Acan. Do not let two lovers pine any longer. Tell us what fate your heart prepares for us.

Tyr. It is better, when one fears such terrible misfortune, to be killed outright by one blow, than to linger so long.

Myr. Let your love resume its calm career, noble shepherds ; the lovely Mélicerte has captivated my heart. My lot is sweet enough with her not to wish to encroach upon you, and if your passions have only mine to fear, neither of you will have any cause to complain.

Acan. Can it be, Myrtil, that two sad lovers . . .

Tyr. Can it be true that Heaven, giving way to our tortures . . .

Myr. Yes, content with my fetters as with a victory, I have declined this choice so full of glory. I have also changed my father's wishes, and made him consent to my happiness.

Acan. [*To Tyrène*] Ah ! what a charming miraculous adventure is this, and what a great obstacle it removes to our pursuits !

Tyr. It may restore these nymphs to our love, and be the means of making us both happy.

SCENE VII.

NICANDRE, MYRTIL, ACANTHE, TYRÈNE.

Nic. Do you know where Mélicerte may be found ?

Myr. What do you mean ?

Nic. She is being looked for everywhere.

Myr. And why ?

Nic. We shall soon lose this beauty. It is for her that

the King has come hither; it is said that he will marry her to some great lord.

Myr. Oh, Heaven! explain these words, I pray.

Nic. They are important and mysterious events. Yes, the King has come to seek Mélicerte in these spots, and they say that formerly her mother Bélise, of whom all Tempe believed Mopse to be the brother . . . But I have undertaken to look for her everywhere. You shall know all about it by-and-bye.

Myr. Oh, great gods, what a calamity! He! Nicandre, Nicandre!

Acan. Let us follow him that we may know all.[14]

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[14] La Grange and Vinot, the editors of the first collected edition of Molière's works (1682), and who published for the first time *Mélicerte*, state "this comedy has not been finished; only these two acts were done when the King asked for it. His Majesty having been satisfied with it, for the feast where it was represented, M. de Molière has not finished it."

PASTORALE COMIQUE.

A COMIC PASTORAL,

INTRODUCED BY MOLIÈRE IN

THE BALLET OF THE MUSES.

(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)

JANUARY 5TH, 1667.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE *Pastorale Comique* was probably represented before the Court on the 5th January, 1667; it formed part of the *Ballet of the Muses*, and most likely replaced the unfinished Mélicerte when the ballet was again given in the beginning of that month. We cannot now discover what plan Molière has followed, or what he intended with the *Pastorale Comique*: he himself suppressed or destroyed the manuscript, and we have only now the couplets that were sung, and which are preserved in the ballet-book and in the musical partition. They show, according to some commentators, a violent desire, in Molière, to deaden his feelings. I confess that I can see in them only the ordinary words of an operatic libretto. We know that our author played the part of Lycas, after he had just been ill; it is possible that his hollow and lean features may intentionally have rendered more ridiculous his love declarations.

I have not thought it necessary to give the names of the dancers, singers, musicians, or gipsies, which are stated in the official programme of the feasts. We have followed in the headings the collected edition of Molière's works, 1734.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PASTORAL.

LYCAS, *a rich shepherd in love with Iris.*[1]
PHILÈNE, *a rich shepherd in love with Iris.*
CORYDON, *a young shepherd, friend of Lycas, in love with Iris.*
A HERDSMAN, *friend of Philène.*
A SHEPHERD.
IRIS, *a young shepherdess.*

IN THE BALLET.

DANCING MAGICIANS.
SINGING MAGICIANS.
DANCING DEMONS.
PEASANTS.
A SINGING AND DANCING GIPSY.
DANCING GIPSIES.

Scene—THESSALY, IN A SMALL VILLAGE IN THE VALLEY OF TEMPE.

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[1] Molière played this part himself.

A COMIC PASTORAL.

(PASTORALE COMIQUE.)

SCENE I.

LYCAS, CORYDON.

SCENE II.

LYCAS, DANCING AND SINGING MAGICIANS, DEMONS.

First Entry of the Ballet.

Two Magicians begin dancing a kind of enchantment to beautify Lycas. They strike the ground with their wands, whereupon six Demons spring from it, who join them. Three more Magicians appear from underground.

Three Magicians [*singing*] Goddess of charms, refuse us not the favour which our lips implore of you. We beseech you for it by your ribbons, by your diamond buckles, by your paint and powder, by your patches, your mask, your head-dress, and your gloves.

A Magician [*by himself*] O you! who can beautify the plainest faces, deign to spread, O, Venus! two or three charitable doses of your charms over this freshly clipped snout!

The Three Magicians [*singing*] Goddess of charms, refuse us not the favour which our lips implore of you. We beseech you for it by your ribbons, by your diamond buckles, by your paint and powder, by your patches, your mask, your head-dress, and your gloves.

Second Entry of the Ballet.

The six dancing Demons dress Lycas up in a ridiculous and strange fashion.

The Three Magicians [*singing*] Ah! how lovely the youngster is now! Ah! how lovely! how lovely! How many fair ones he will kill. The most cruel maids will jump out of their skin when they approach him. Ah! how lovely the youngster is now. Ah! how lovely, how lovely! Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho!

Third Entry of the Ballet.

The Magicians and the Demons continue their dancing, whilst the three singing Magicians continue to make fun of Lycas.

Three Magicians [*singing*] How fair is he! how pretty and polished! How fair is he! how fair is he! Are there any eyes that can withstand him? He is more lovely than the late Narcissus, who was a consummate beau. How fair is he! how pretty and polished! How fair is he! Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi, hi!

[*The three singing Magicians disappear in the ground, and the dancing Magicians exeunt at the sides.*]

SCENE III.

LYCAS, PHILÈNE.

Phil. [*without perceiving Lycas, sings*] Browse, my pretty lambs, the sprouting grass. These meadows and these brooks have something to charm you. But if you wish to live content for ever, dear little innocents, beware of love.

Lyc. [*without perceiving Philène, and wishing to compose some verses for his mistress, pronounces the name of Iris loud enough for Philène to hear it*].

Phil. Is it you whom I hear, audacious wretch? Is it you who dare pronounce the name of her who holds me 'neath her sway.

Lyc. Yes, it is I; yes, it is I.

Phil. How dare you in any way profane that lovely name

Lyc. Eh, why not? why not?

Phil. Iris charms my soul; and whosoever shall dare to indulge in the slightest spark of love for her will repent of it.

Lyc. I do not care for that, I do not care for that.

Phil. I will strangle and eat you, if ever you name my fair. Whatever I say I do—I will strangle and eat you. It is enough that I have sworn it. Even if the gods take your part, I will strangle and eat you, if ever you name my fair.

Lyc. Nonsense, nonsense.

SCENE IV.

IRIS, LYCAS.

SCENE V.

LYCAS, A COWHERD.

A Cowherd brings Lycas a challenge from Philène, his rival.

SCENE VI.

LYCAS, CORYDON.

SCENE VII.

PHILÈNE, LYCAS.

Phil. [*sings*] Stay wretch! turn round; and let us see which of us two shall gain the day. [*Lycas hesitates to fight.*

Enough of chatter; come, you must die.

SCENE VIII.

PHILÈNE, LYCAS, EIGHT PEASANTS.

The peasants rush in to separate Philene and Lycas.

Fourth Entry of the Ballet.

The peasants begin to quarrel among themselves, while they are trying to separate the two shepherds, and dance while fighting.

SCENE IX.

CORYDON, LYCAS, PHILÈNE, PEASANTS.

Corydon, by speaking to them, finds means to appease the dispute of the peasants.

Fifth Entry of the Ballet.

The reconciled peasants dance together.

SCENE X.

CORYDON, LYCAS, PHILÈNE.

SCENE XI.

IRIS, CORYDON.

SCENE XII.

PHILÈNE, LYCAS, IRIS, CORYDON.

Lycas and Philène, the two lovers of the shepherdess, press her to decide which of them she prefers.

Phil. [*to Iris*] Do not expect me to boast about the choice regarding which you hesitate ; you can see I love you ; that tells you enough.

The shepherdess decides in favour of Corydon.

SCENE XIII.

PHILÈNE, LYCAS.

Phil. Alas! can any one feel a more poignant grief? A menial shepherd is to us preferred, oh Heavens!

Lyc. [*sings*] Oh fates!

Phil. What harshness!

Lyc. What a blow!

Phil. So many tears,

Lyc. And so much perseverance,

Phil. Such languor,

Lyc. So much suffering,

Phil. Such protestations,

Lyc. And such cares,

Phil. Such ardour,

Lyc. So much love,

Phil. Are treated with so much disdain this day! Ah! cruel one!

Lyc. Hard-hearted fair!

Phil. And tigress too!

Lyc. Merciless maid!

Phil. Inhuman one!

Lyc. You stubborn girl!

Phil. Ungrateful one!

Lyc. Pitiless one!

Phil. You wish to kill us then? it is well; we shall content you.

Lyc. We shall obey you.

Phil. [*drawing his javelin*] Lycas, let us die.

Lyc. [*drawing his javelin*] Philène, let us die.

Phil. Let us end our sufferings with this steel.

Lyc. Pierce!

Phil. Be firm!

Lyc. Take courage!

Phil. Come, you first.

Lyc. No, I will be last.

Phil. Since the same misfortune this day brings us together, let us depart together.

SCENE XIV.

A SHEPHERD, LYCAS, PHILÈNE.

The Shepherd [*sings*] What folly to quit life for a fair one who rejects us! We might wish to quit this life for a lovely object's sake, whose heart favours us, but to die for the fair one who rejects us, is folly!

SCENE XV.

A GIPSY, DANCING GIPSIES.

The Gipsy. Relieve the torment of a poor heart. Of a poor heart relieve the suffering. In vain I depict my ardent flame; I see you laugh at my repining: Ah! cruel one, I die through so much harshness. Relieve the martyrdom of a poor heart; of a poor heart relieve the suffering.

Sixth Entry of the Ballet.

Twelve gipsies, of whom four play the guitar, four the castagnettes, four the *gnacares*,[2] dance with the gipsy to the measure of her song.

The Gipsy. Believe me, let us hasten, my Sylvia, and profit well by the precious time; let us here satisfy our desires. The passions of our age invite us; you and I could not do better.

Winter has covered our fields with ice, Spring comes to take her place again, and to our pastures gives their charms.

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[2] The gnacares were cymbals of small size, and of unequal diameter. The Saracens used them on horseback to regulate the march of their squadrons.

But when, alas! old age has chilled us; our happy days return no more.

Let us seek all day naught but what pleases us; let us both be earnest about it; let pleasure be our business; let us get rid of all our troubles: a time will come when we shall have enough of them.

Winter has covered our fields with ice, Spring comes to take her place again, and to our pastures gives their charms. But when alas! old age has chilled our feelings, our happy days return no more.

LE SICILIEN; OU, L'AMOUR PEINTRE.

COMÉDIE.

THE SICILIAN; OR, LOVE MAKES THE PAINTER.

COMEDY-BALLET IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL PARTLY IN PROSE AND PARTLY IN VERSE).

FEBRUARY 14TH, (?) 1667.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Sicilian; or, Love makes the Painter, was represented, probably on the 14th, or the 16th of February 1667, at the palace of Versailles, before Louis XIV. and the whole Court. It was not placed, like *Mélicerte* and the *Pastorale Comique*, in the third entry of the *Ballet des Muses*, but formed a fourteenth entry, with the following official heading:—"Fourteenth entry. After so many different nations which the Muses made to appear in the divers assemblies which formed the entertainment which they gave to the King, there was nothing wanting but to bring upon the stage Turks and Moors; and that is what they have thought of doing in this last entry, with which they have connected a little comedy to give scope to the charms of music and dancing, by which they wish to end."

We give the official libretto of the analysis of *The Sicilian*, omitting only the names of the dancers and singers. The senator of the comedy is here called "a Sicilian magistrate."

Scene 1st. Hali, by his master's orders, brings upon the stage three Turkish musicians to give a serenade.

Scene 2d. Adraste asks for the three musicians, and, to oblige Isidore to come to the window, lets them sing a scene from a comedy.

Scene 3d. Don Pedro, in the dark, comes out of the house in a dressing-gown, to try to discover who gives the serenade.

Scene 4th. Hali promises his master to invent some trick in order to let Isidore know the love which he has for her.

Scene 5th. Isidore complains to Don Pedro of the precaution he takes to bring her everywhere with him.

Scene 6th. Hali, endeavouring to let Isidore know his master's love, cleverly makes use of five Turkish slaves, of whom one sings and the four others dance, proposing them to Don Pedro as slaves agreeable and capable of amusing him. A Turkish slave sings at first, "An impassioned heart follows its beloved object everywhere, &c.," by which he pretends to express the passion of Adraste, and to make it known to Isidore in the presence of Don Pedro. The Turkish slave, after having sung, fearing that Don Pedro might understand the meaning of what he had just said, and perceive the trick, turns wholly towards Don Pedro, and to amuse him, sings in the *lingua franca* these words, "Chiribirida houcha la, &c," whereupon the four other

Turkish slaves dance. The slave, who is a musician, begins again "Chiribirida houcha la, &c.;" then, convinced that Don Pedro suspects nothing, he addresses himself to Isidore and sings, "It is a complete martyrdom, &c." As soon as he has finished, always afraid that Don Pedro may perceive something, he begins again "Chiribirida houcha la, &c.;" then the four slaves dance again. At last Don Pedro, perceiving the trick, sings in his turn the words, "Do you know, you scamp, &c."[1]

Scene 7th. Hali informs his master of what he has done, and his master communicates to him the stratagem he has planned.

Scene 8th. Adraste goes to Don Pedro's house to paint the portrait of Isidore.

Scene 9th. Hali, disguised as a Sicilian gentleman, comes to ask Don Pedro's advice about an affair of honour.

Scene 10th. Isidore commends the politeness of Adraste to Don Pedro.

Scene 11th. Zaide comes to throw herself into the arms of Don Pedro, so that he might protect her against the pretended anger of Adraste.

Scene 12th. Adaste pretends that he wishes to kill Zaide; but at Don Pedro's intercession, he moderates his wrath.

Scene 13th. Don Pedro places Isidore, under the veil of Zaide, in the hands of Adraste.

Scene 14th. Zaide reproaches Don Pedro with his jealousy, and tells him that Isidore is no longer in his power.

Scene 15th. Don Pedro goes to complain before a Sicilian magistrate, who only speaks to him about a masquerade of Moors, which ends the Comedy and the Ballet.

The dancing Moors were of three kinds—Moors and Moorish girls of quality, who were the King, M. le Grand, the Marquesses de Villeroi and de Rassan, Madame, Mademoiselle de la Vallière, Madame de Rochefort, and Mademoiselle de Brancas; naked Moors, and *Maures à capots*, or Moors with light dresses to imitate skin, who were professional dancers.

This comedy was not given to the public before the 10th of June 1667, when it was acted for the first time, with the eighteenth representation of *Attila*, a tragedy by P. Corneille. This delay had been caused by an attack of illness of Molière.

In this little comedy, the author has often employed blank verse; and that he has done so purposely has clearly been proved.

John Crowne, in *The Country Wit*, acted at the Duke's Theatre in 1675, has imitated a large portion of the plot, as well as of the language of *The Sicilian*. Crowne's play is said to have been a great favourite

1 This is the ninth scene of the Comedy.

with Charles II. and also with the public, although the author, in the dedication to the Right Honourable Charles, Earl of Middlesex, better known as the Earl of Dorset, states that it "stood firmer than I expected, and withstood the battery of a whole party who did me the honour to profess themselves my enemies, and made me appear more considerable than ever I thought myself, by shewing that no less than a confederacy was necessary to ruin my reputation." Both in the prologue and in the dedication, the author sarcastically states that every man thinks himself a wit, and that "city and country is with wit o'erflown." *Country Wit* is rather a good, though a very coarse, play. Don Pedro is called Lord Drybone; Isidore, Betty Frisque; Hali, Merry; and Adraste, Ramble; but there is also another plot in this comedy, in which Sir Thomas Rash wishes his daughter Christina to marry Sir Mannerly Shallow, a foolish country knight. Instead of Hali and Pedro quarrelling, as in *The Sicilian*, Sir Thomas and Lord Drybone fight and are seized by the watch; in the English play, it is also Merry, the servant, who advises his master to go to Betty Frisque's house as a painter, whilst, in the French comedy, Adraste plans it himself. Lady Faddle, Sir Mannerly Shallow, and the porter, Thomas Rash, and his wife, are not to be found in *The Sicilian*. The first two characters appear to be a reminiscence of Molière's *Countess of Escarbagnas* and *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, whilst some of the scenes between Rambler and his man seem to be freely followed from some in the French author's *Amphitryon*. Crowne's play gives a very peculiar idea of the manners and customs of the times in which he wrote. The licentiousness of his personages is only equalled by the excessive freedom of language which they use; a language which must have startled some of the audience, even in Charles II.'s reign.

Sir Richard Steele, in *The Tender Husband*, acted for the first time at the Theatre, Drury Lane, 1703, has also imitated the twelfth scene of Molière's play; but Adraste is there called Captain Clerimont, and Isidore, simply Niece. I imagine that Sir Richard also took the liberty of borrowing from Crowne Sir Mannerly Shallow and transforming him into Humphrey Gubbin. Addison wrote the prologue, and is said to have given some assistance in the composition of this play.

Charles Dibdin also wrote an opera called *The Metamorphoses*, acted at the Haymarket, probably at the end of 1776, but not with much success, and which is borrowed chiefly from Molière's *Sicilian*, with one character from *George Dandin*. Don Pedro wishes to marry his ward Marcella. Fabio, the servant, assumes, like Hali, various disguises. The catastrophe in which Juletta enters, veiled, Don Pedro's house, and asks the latter to protect her against Lysander, her husband's wrath, and in which Marcella leaves her home muffled in the veil of Juletta, is borrowed from *The Sicilian;* the booby servant Perer is imitated from *George Dandin*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON PEDRO, *a Sicilian gentleman.*[2]

ADRASTE, *a French gentleman, in love with Isidore.*

ISIDORE, *a Greek girl, Don Pedro's slave.*

A SENATOR.

HALI, *a Turk, Adraste's slave.*

ZAIDE, *a young slave girl.*

TWO SERVANTS.

MUSICIANS.

A SLAVE, *singing.*

SLAVES, *dancing.*

MOORS OF BOTH SEXES, *dancing.*

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[2] This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, and given by M. E. Soulié in the *Recherches sur Molière*, we find: "A dress for *The Sicilian*, the breeches and cloak of violet satin, embroidered with gold and silver, lined with green tabby, the skirt of gold-colour watered silk, with sleeves of silver cloth, adorned with silver embroideries; also a night-cap, a wig, and a sword."

THE SICILIAN ; OR, LOVE MAKES THE PAINTER.

(LE SICILIEN; OU, L' AMOUR PEINTRE.)

SCENE I.

HALI, MUSICIANS.

Hali [*to the musicians*] Hush. Do not come any farther, and stay where you are until I call you.

SCENE II.

HALI, *alone.*[3]

It is as dark as pitch. The sky is dressed like a *Scaramouche*[4] this evening, and I do not see a star that shows the tip of its nose. What a droll condition is that of a slave, never to live for one's self, and always to be entirely engrossed by the passions of one's master, to be controlled by nothing but his whims, and to see one's self reduced to make all his cares one's own concern! Mine makes me here share his anxieties; and because he is in love, I

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[3] See Appendix, Note A.

[4] See Vol. III., page 199, note 4. Let me state, at the same time, that Scaramouche was very much liked by Louis XIV., and, when first presented, sang a trio with a trained dog and a parrot. In the latter part of his life, Scaramouche had the misfortune to marry a coquette; but the King took an interest in the actor's marital misfortunes, and even got his minister to write to the Lieutenant-General of Police about her conduct. The magistrate threatened her with imprisonment, if she did not lead a more moral, sober, and righteous life.

am forced to lose my rest both day and night. But here come some torch-bearers. It is he, no doubt.[5]

SCENE III.

ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS, *each carrying a torch*, HALI.

Adr. Is it you, Hali?

Hali. And who should it be but me? At this hour of the night, except you and me, sir, I do not think that anyone takes it into his head to roam the streets now.

Adr. Nor do I think that anyone can be met who feels in his heart the grief that I do. For, after all, it is nothing to have to overcome the indifference or the harsh treatment of the fair one, whom one loves; one has always, at least, the pleasure of complaining, and the liberty of sighing for her. But not to be able to find any opportunity of speaking to her whom one adores, not to be able to learn from the fair one whether the passion which her eyes have kindled pleases or displeases her; that is, in my opinion, the most annoying of all anxieties; and that is to what I am reduced

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[5] We have said in the *Introductory Notice*, that Molière has employed blank verse in this play. We give below Hali's soliloquy in French, not as it is printed in the original, but scanned:—

"Il fait noir comme dans un four,
Le ciel s'est habillé ce soir en Scaramouche,
Et je ne vois pas une étoile
Qui montre le bout de son nez.
Sotte condition que celle d'un esclave,
De ne vivre jamais pour soi,
Et d'être toujours tout entier
Aux passions d' un maître . . .
Le mien me fait ici
Epouser ses inquiétudes;
Et, parce qu'il est amoureux
Il faut que nuit et jour je n' aie aucun repos.
Mais voici des flambeaux, et, sans doute, c' est lui."

[6] See Appendix, Note B.

by that tiresome, jealous fellow, who watches with such care over my charming Greek, and who does not stir a step, without dragging her at his side.

Hali. But in love there are various ways of speaking to each other; and it seems to me that your eyes and hers have told many things during nearly two months.

Adr. It is true that she and I have frequently spoken to each other through our eyes; but how to find out if we have correctly interpreted this language, on either side? And how do I know, after all, whether she quite understands everything that my glances tell her, and whether hers tell me that which I sometimes fancy they do?

Hali. We must find some other mode of speaking with her.

Adr. Have you your musicians here?

Hali. Yes.

Adr. Tell them to come near. [*Alone*] I will make them sing here until daybreak, and see whether their music will not oblige the fair one to come to one of the windows.

SCENE IV.

ADRASTE, HALI, MUSICIANS.

Hali. Here they are. What shall they sing?

Adr. What they think best.

Hali. They must sing the trio that they sang to me the other day.

Adr. No. That is not what I want.

Hali. Ah! sir, it is in that beautiful natural.

Adr. What the deuce do you mean by that beautiful natural.

Hali. Sir, I am fond of the natural. You know that I am a judge. I love the natural; without the natural, there is no salvation in harmony. Just listen for a little to this trio.

Adr. No, I wish something tender and impassioned; something that will lull me as in a sweet dream.

Hali. I see that you prefer the flat;[7] but there is a way of satisfying us both. They shall sing a certain scene of a little comedy that I have heard them attempt. Two shepherds, in love, quite full of languor, separately come into a grove to make their complaints in a flat; they confide to each other the cruelty of their mistresses; then comes a jovial shepherd with an admirable natural, who laughs at their weakness.

Adr. Very well. Let us hear what it is.

Hali. Here is just the very spot to serve as a stage; and here are two torches to throw a light upon the play.

Adr. Place yourself against this house, so that at the slightest noise inside, we may extinguish the lights.

FRAGMENT OF A COMEDY, SUNG AND ACCOMPANIED BY THE MUSICIANS WHOM HALI HAS BROUGHT.

SCENE I.

PHILÈNE, TIRCIS.

First Musician [*who represents Philène*]. If with the sorrowful tale of my grief I disturb the quiet of your solitude, do not be angry, O rocks. Rocks, though you are, you will be touched, when you know the excess of my hidden anguish.

Second Musician [*who represents Tircis*]. The gladsome birds, when day begins to break, renew their song in these vast forests; and I renew my languishing sighs, and my sad regrets. Ah! dear Philène.

Phil. Ah! dear Tircis!

Tir. What grief I feel!

Phil. What cares I have!

Tir. Ever deaf to my sighs is the ungrateful Climène.

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[7] The French for a natural is *bécarre*, and for a flat *bémol*.

Phil. Chloris has no sweet looks for me.

Both together. O too inhuman law! If you cannot compel them to love, O Cupid! why do you leave them the power of charming?

SCENE II.

PHILÈNE, TIRCIS, A SHEPHERD.

Third Musician [*who represents a shepherd*]. Poor lovers, what a mistake to adore merciless creatures! Sensible minds ought never to bear with harsh treatment; and favours are the chains which ought to bind our hearts. Here are a hundred fair ones to whom I hasten to offer my tender cares; it is my greatest delight. But when they act like tigresses, upon my word I become a tiger too.

Phil. and Tir. [*Together*]. Happy, alas! are they who can love thus.

Hali. Sir, I just heard some noise inside.

Adr. Be off quickly, and extinguish the torches.

SCENE V.

DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, HALI.[8]

Don P. [*In a night-cap and a dressing-gown, with a sword under his arm, coming out of his house*]. I have noticed this singing going on for some time at my door; and no doubt this is not done for nothing. I must try to discover in the dark who these people can be.

Adr. Hali!

Hali. What is it?

Adr. Do you no longer hear anything?

Hali. No. [*Don Pedro is behind them, listening.*

Adr. What! are all our efforts to speak for one moment with this pretty Greek in vain! and shall this

[8] See Appendix, Note C.

cursed jealous fellow, this wretched Sicilian, for ever bar all access to her!

Hali. I wish with all my heart that the devil had taken him for the trouble he gives us, the tiresome fellow, the hangdog that he is. Ah! if we only had him here, how delighted should I be to avenge upon his back all the fruitless steps which his jealousy causes us.

Adr. We must, for all that, find some means, some trick, some stratagem, to catch our brute. I am too far advanced to be baffled now; and although I should have to use . . .

Hali. I do not know what this means, but the door is open, Sir; and, if you like, I will go in softly, to find out what is the cause of this. . .

[*Don Pedro goes back to his door.*

Adr. Yes, do so; but do not make a noise. I shall not be far away. Would to Heaven it were the charming Isidore!

Don P. [*Giving Hali a slap in the face*] Who goes there?

Hali. [*Doing the same to Don Pedro*] A friend.

Don P. Hullo! Francisque, Dominique, Simon, Martin Pierre, Thomas, Georges, Charles, Barthélemy. Come, look sharp, my sword, my buckler, my halberd, my pistols, my blunderbusses, my guns. Quick, make haste. Here, kill and slay, give no quarter![9]

SCENE VI.

ADRASTE, HALI.

Adr. I hear not a soul stir. Hali, Hali!

Hali. [*Hid in a corner*] Sir?

Adr. Where are you hiding yourself?

[9] See Appendix, Note D.

Hali. Have these people come out?

Adr. No. No one is stirring.

Hali. [*Coming out of his corner*] If they do come, they shall have a drubbing.

Adr. What! Shall all our trouble be for nothing? Shall this tiresome, jealous fellow always laugh at our attempts!

Hali. No. I get angry, and my honour is at stake: it shall not be said that anyone has outwitted me. My reputation as a rogue disdains all these obstacles; and I am determined to show the talents that Heaven has given me.

Adr. I only wish her, by some means, by some note, by some voice, to be informed of my feelings towards her, and in return, to know hers upon the subject. After that, we can easily find some means. . . .

Hali. Only let me manage it. I shall try so many sorts of things, that something or other, in short, may succeed. Come, day breaks; I shall go and fetch my men, and wait here, until our jealous fellow goes out.

SCENE VII.

DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

Isid. I do not know what pleasure you can have in waking me so early. It agrees badly, I think, with your intention of having my portrait painted to-day. You can hardly expect me to have a fresh complexion and sparkling eyes by making me get up at break of day.

Don P. Some business compels me to go out at this hour.

Isid. But this business can be very well transacted, I believe, without my presence; and you might, without incommoding yourself, have allowed me to taste the sweets of the morning's slumber.

Don P. Yes. But I am very glad of having you always

with me. It is as well to be on one's guard a little against those vigilant swains; and not later than last night, people came and sang under our windows.

Isid. That is true. The music was charming.

Don P. It was intended for you?

Isid. I must believe so, since you say so.

Don P. Do you know who gave this serenade?

Isid. I do not; but, whoever he was, I am obliged to him.

Don P. Obliged?

Isid. Undoubtedly, since he seeks to amuse me.

Don P. You think it right, then, that people love you?

Isid. Decidedly. There is never anything offensive in that?

Don P. And you wish well to all who take that trouble?

Isid. Certainly.

Don P. You say pretty plainly what you think.

Isid. What is the good of dissimulating? Whatever we may pretend, we are always well pleased to be loved. This homage to our charms is never disagreeable to us. Whatever we may say, believe me, the great ambition of women is to inspire love. All the cares they bestow upon themselves are for that only; and the proudest inwardly applauds herself for the conquests which her eyes make.

Don P. But if you take so much pleasure in being beloved, do you know that I, who love you, do not take any in it?

Isid. I do not know why this should be, and if I loved any one, I should have no greater pleasure than seeing her beloved by everyone. Is there anything which marks more plainly the beauty of one's choice? and ought we not to congratulate ourselves in thinking that what we love is found very loveable?

Don P. Each one loves in his own peculiar fashion, and

this is not my way. I should be very delighted if people did not think you so beautiful, and you will oblige me by not trying to appear so in other people's eyes.

Isid. What! are you jealous of these things?

Don P. Yes, jealous of these things; but as jealous as a tiger, or, if you like it better, as a devil. My love claims you all for itself. Its delicacy is offended at a smile, at a glance which may be drawn from you; and all the precautions which I take are only to bar every access to those admirers, and to assure myself of the possession of a heart, the slightest part of which I cannot bear to be robbed of.

Isid. In good truth, shall I tell you? you enter upon a wrong path; and the possession of a heart is but badly secured, if it is to be retained by force. As for me, I admit candidly, that were I the admirer of a woman who was in some one's power, I would study everything to make that other person jealous, and to compel him to watch night and day over her whom I should like to win. It is an admirable way to forward our wishes, and people are never very long in profiting by the spite and anger which restraint and servitude awake in the breast of a woman.

Don P. At this rate, if any one made love to you, he would find you disposed to receive his addresses?

Isid. I will say nothing about that. But, in short, women do not like to be restrained; and it is running a great risk to show them your suspicions, and to keep them imprisoned.

Don P. You but little acknowledge what you owe me; and it seems to me that a slave to whom I have given her freedom, and whom I wish to make my wife. . . .

Isid. Where is the obligation, if you but change one slavery into another more severe still, and if you do not allow me to enjoy the least freedom, and tire me, as you do, with continual watching?

Don P. But all this proceeds but from an excess of love.

Isid. If that is your way of loving, I beseech you to hate me.

Don P. You are in a pettish humour to-day: and I forgive you your words on account of the annoyance which you may feel at having risen so early.

SCENE VIII.

DON PEDRO, ISIDORE, HALI, *dressed as a Turk, bowing repeatedly to Don Pedro.*

Don P. A truce to these ceremonies. What do you want?

Hali. [*Placing himself between Don Pedro and Isidore. At each word which he speaks to Don Pedro he turns to Isidore, and makes signs to her to let her understand the designs of his master*] Signor (with the signora's leave,) I will tell you (with the signora's leave,) that I have come to see you (with the signora's leave,) to ask you (with the signora's leave), to have the kindness (with the signora's leave). . . .

Don P. With the signora's leave, come a little on this side. [*Don Pedro places himself between Isidore and Hali*]

Hali. I am a virtuoso,[10] signor.

Don P. I have nothing to give away.

Hali. I am not asking for anything. But as I meddle a little with music and dancing, I have taught some slaves, who would be glad to find a master who takes a delight in these things; and knowing that you are a gentleman of some importance, I have come to ask you to look at them and to listen to them, to buy them if they please you, or to recom-

[10] Molière was the first to employ the word *virtuose* as a French noun, though Madame de Motteville had already used it in its Italian form.

mend them to one of your friends, who might be willing to engage them.

Isid. We might see their performance; it will amuse us. Fetch them hither

Hali. Chala bala. That is a new song, the latest out. Listen well. Chala bala.

SCENE IX.

DON PEDRO, ISIDORE, HALI, TURKISH SLAVES.

A Slave. [*Singing to Isidore*] A lover with an impassioned heart follows its beloved object everywhere; but the eternal watchfulness of an odious jealousy prevents him speaking to her except by his eyes. Can there be aught more painful to a heart in love?[11] [*To Don Pedro*] Chiribirida ouch alla, Star bon Turca, Non aver danara. Ti voler comprara? Mi servir à ti, Se pagar per mi; Far bona cucina, Mi levar matina, Far boller caldara; Parlara, parlara, Ti voler comprara?[12]

First Entry of the Ballet.

Dance of the Slaves.

A Slave. [*Singing to Isidore*] It is a complete torture under which this lover expires; but if the fair one will only 'look upon his martyrdom with a gentle eye, and consent that he may sigh for her charms in the eyes of the whole world, then he may soon laugh at all the precautions of jealousy. [*To Don Pedro*] Chiribirida ouch alla,

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[11] The ballet-book, which is given in the Introductory Notice, mentions here some indications of stage play, which are very useful for the better understanding of this scene.

[12] This couplet is in *lingua franca*, and with the exception of the first line, too free to be translated, is as follows: I am a good Turk, I have no money. Will you buy me? I shall serve you, if you pay for me. I shall do good cooking, I shall rise early, I shall make the pot boil. Speak, speak, will you buy me?

Star bon Turca, Non aver danara; Ti voler comprara? Mi servir à ti, Se pagar per mi; Far bona cucina, Me levar matina, Far boller caldara; Parlara, parlara, Ti voler comprara?

Second Entry of the Ballet.

The Slaves recommence dancing.

Don P. [*Sings*] Do you know, you scamps, that this song smells of stick for your backs? Chiribirida ouch alla, Mi ti non comprara, Ma ti bastonara, Si ti non andara; Andara, andara, O ti bastonara.[13]

Oh! oh! what merry sparks! [*To Isidore*] Come, let us go in again: I have changed my mind; and moreover, the weather looks rather threatening. [*To Hali, who comes back*] Ah! you rogue! let me catch you at it again!

Hali. Well! yes, my master adores her. He has no greater desire than to show her his love; and, if she consents to it, to take her for his wife.

Don P. Yes, yes, I will keep her for him.

Hali. We shall get her in spite of you.

Don P. What do you mean, you scoundrel . . .

Hali. We shall get her, I tell you, in spite of your teeth.

Don P. If I take . . .

Hali. You may watch as much as you like. She shall be ours; I have sworn it.

Don P. Leave me alone, I shall catch you without fatiguing myself.

Hali. It is we who will catch you. She shall be our wife; our mind is made up. [*Alone*] I must accomplish it, or perish in the attempt.

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[13] The meaning of these words, which are also in *lingua franca*, is: I will not buy you, but I will give you a cudgelling, if you do not go away. Go away, go away, or I will give you a cudgelling.

SCENE X.

ADRASTE, HALI, TWO SERVANTS.[14]

Adr. Well, Hali, are our affairs improving?

Hali. I have already made some little attempt, sir; but I . . .

Adr. Do not trouble yourself about it; I have found, by accident, all that I wish; and I shall enjoy the happiness of seeing this fair one in her own house. I happened to be at Damon's, the artist, who told me that he had to go to-day to paint the portrait of this charming creature; and as we are intimate friends of long standing, he wishes to serve my flame, and sends me, in his place, with a few words of introduction. You know that I was always fond of painting, and that I sometimes handle the brush myself, much against the French custom, which forbids a nobleman to know how to do anything;[15] so shall I have the liberty of seeing this fair one at my ease. But I do not doubt that my jealous bore will always be there, and prevent any conversation between us; and, to tell you the truth, I have, by the aid of a young slave girl, prepared a stratagem to get this fair Greek out of the hands of her tormentor, if I can prevail with her to consent to it.

Hali. Leave it to me; I will put you in the way to converse with her. [*Whispers to Adraste*] It shall not be said that I count for nothing in this affair. When are you going there?

Adr. This very minute; I have already prepared everything.

Hali. And I am going, on my part, to prepare myself.

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[14] See Appendix, Note E.

[15] Several great writers of the age of Louis XIV. have made fun of this privilege of idleness, which many of the French nobles thought to belong to them.

Adr. I will lose no time. Hullo! I will not delay the pleasure of seeing her.[16]

SCENE XI.

DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS.[17]

Don P. For whom are you looking in this house, sir?

Adr. I am looking for Don Pedro.

Don P. He stands before you.

Adr. He will take the trouble to read this letter, if it please him.

Don P. I send you, instead of myself, for the portrait in question, this French gentleman, who, anxious to oblige, has been good enough to undertake this task at my wish. He is, unquestionably, the first man in the world for this sort of work, and I thought that I could do you no more agreeable service than to send him to you, since you intend to have a finished portrait of the person whom you love. But, above all, take care not to speak to him about any remuneration; for he would be offended at it, and does these things only for the sake of fame and reputation. Sir Frenchman, you intend doing me a great favour, and I am very much obliged to you.

Adr. All my ambition is to oblige people of standing and merit.

Don P. I will call the person in question.

SCENE XII.

ISIDORE, DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS.[18]

Don P. [*To Isidore*] This is a gentleman whom Damon sends us, and who will be kind enough to undertake your

[16] When *The Sicilian* is performed in the present day, the scene changes to the interior of Don Pedro's house.

[17] See Appendix, Note F. [18] See Appendix, Note G.

portrait. [*To Adraste, who, in saluting Isidore, embraces her*] Hullo! Sir Frenchman, this way of saluting is not the fashion in this country.

Adr. It is the fashion of France.

Don P. The fashion of France may suit your ladies; but, for ours, it is somewhat too familiar.

Isid. I accept this honour with much pleasure. The adventure surprises me immensely; and, to tell the truth, I did not expect to have such an illustrious painter.

Adr. There is no one, doubtless, who would not think it an honour to engage on such a work. I have no great talent; but, in this case, the subject provides more than enough in itself, and we can do something beautiful with such an original to work from.

Isid. The original is but little to speak of; but the skill of the painter will be able to hide its defects.

Adr. The painter cannot perceive any; and all that he wishes is to be able to represent its charms to the world's eyes in the same perfection as he sees them.

Isid. If your brush flatter as much as your tongue, you will paint a portrait which will not be at all like me.

Adr. Heaven, who made the original, has prevented us from making a portrait of it that could be flattering.

Isid. Whatever you may say, Heaven has not . . .

Don P. Let us finish this, pray. Let us leave compliments, and think about the portrait.

Adr. [*To the servants*] Come, bring my things.

[*They bring the necessary painting implements.*

Isid. [*To Adraste*] Where shall I sit?

Adr. Here. This is the right spot, and catches best the precise light we want.

Isid. [*After sitting down*] Am I right thus?

Adr. Yes. Hold yourself up a little. A little more that way. Your body turned thus. Your head raised a

little, to show the beauty of the throat. This a little more open. [*He uncovers her neck a little more*] That is it. There, a little more; just another shade.

Don P. [*To Isidore*] What a fuss to put you right; cannot you sit properly?

Isid. These things are altogether new to me; and it is for this gentleman to place me as he likes.

Adr. [*Seated*] There, it could not be better, and you sit admirably. [*Turning her a little towards him*] Like this, if you please. The whole depends upon the attitude which we give to the people we paint.

Don P. Very good.

Adr. A little more this way. Your eyes turned towards me, I pray; your looks fixed on mine.

Isid. I am not like those ladies, who, having their portraits painted, wish them to be unlike themselves, and are not satisfied with the painter unless he makes them more lovely than the day. To content them, one ought to make but one picture for them all; for they all ask for the same thing,—a complexion entirely of lilies and roses, a well shaped nose, a small mouth, and large sparkling eyes; and, above all, the face no larger than a hand, even if they have one a foot wide. As for me, I ask you for a portrait that is like me, and which shall not compel people to ask whose it is.

Adr. It would be difficult to have it asked of yours; and your features are very unlike those of others. How sweet and charming they are, and how much risk there is in painting them!

Don P. The nose seems to me a little too large.

Adr. I have read, I know not where, that Apelles, of old, painted a mistress of Alexander, so marvellously beautiful, that, while painting, he became so hopelessly enamoured of her, that it nearly cost him his life; had not Alexander,

out of generosity, ceded to him the object of his love. [*To Don Pedro*] I might do the same here as Apelles did of old; but you would not do the same, perhaps, as Alexander.

[*Don Pedro makes a grimace.*

Isid. [*To Don Pedro*] This is like all those of his nationality. These French gentlemen have always such a stock of gallantry that they scatter it everywhere.

Adr. One is seldom mistaken in this sort of thing, and you have too much good sense not to see whence come the words which one says to you. Yes, were Alexander present, and your lover, I could not help telling you that I have never beheld aught so beautiful as what I see now, and that . . .

Don P. Sir Frenchman, I think you ought not to talk so much; it takes your attention from your work.

Adr. Ah! Not at all. I am in the habit of talking when I paint, and a little conversation is necessary in these cases to wake up the mind, and to keep the faces of those we paint in the requisite gay mood.[19]

SCENE XIII.

HALI *disguised as a Spanish gentleman,*[20] DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, ISIDORE.[21]

Don P. What does this man want? And who lets people walk up without announcing them?

Hali. [*To Don Pedro*] I have entered boldly; but between gentlemen, such freedom is allowed. Sir, am I known to you?

Don P. No, Sir.

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[19] See Appendix, Note H.

[20] In the ballet, Hali is dressed as a Sicilian gentleman; but here, as a Spanish one. Hence his Castilian name, Don Gilles d'Avalos.

[21] See Appendix, Note I.

Hali. I am Don Gilles d'Avalos; and the history of Spain must have made you acquainted with my merit.

Don P. Do you wish anything from me?

Hali. Yes, advice upon an affair of honour. I know that it would be difficult to find a gentleman more perfect in these matters than you; but I must beg of you as a favour to draw a little aside.

Don P. This will be far enough.

Adr. [*To Don Pedro, who catches him whispering to Isidore*] She has blue eyes.

Hali. [*Drawing Don Pedro away from Adraste and Isidore*] Sir, I have received a slap in the face. You know what a slap is,[22] when it is given with an open hand, in the very middle of the cheek. I take this slap much to heart; and I am uncertain whether, to avenge the insult, I ought to fight my man, or rather to have him assassinated.

Don P. Assassinated; that is the surest and quickest way. Who is your enemy?

Hali. Let us speak low, if you please.

[*Hali holds Don Pedro, while speaking to him in such a manner that he cannot see Adraste.*

Adr. [*At Isidore's knees, while Hali and Don Pedro whisper together*] Yes, charming Isidore, my looks have told you as much for the last two months, and you have understood them. I love you more than aught else, and I have no other thought, no other aim, no other passion, than to be yours all my life.

Isid. I do not know whether you speak the truth; but you make me believe you.

Adr. But do I make you believe me sufficiently to inspire you with ever so little kindness towards myself?

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[22] Hali has given a slap in the face to Don Pedro in the fifth scene.

Isid. I only fear I have too much.

Adr. Have you enough, fair Isidore, to consent to the plan of which I have told you?

Isid. I cannot tell you yet.

Adr. What are you waiting for?

Isid. To make up my mind.

Adr. Ah! when people love with all their hearts, they make up their minds quickly.

Isid. Very well then! yes, I consent to it.

Adr. But do you consent, tell me, that it be this very moment?

Isid. When once our mind is made up about a thing, do we consider the time?

Don Ped. [*To Hali*] This is my opinion, and I kiss your hands.

Hali. Sir, if ever you receive a slap in the face, I am also a man of counsel; and I may be able to return the service.

Don P. You will pardon me for not seeing you to the door; but, between gentlemen, such freedom is allowed.[23]

Adr. [*To Isidore*] No, there is nothing that could efface from my heart the tender proofs . . . [*To Don Pedro, who perceives him speaking very closely to Isidore*] I was looking at this little dimple which she has got at the side of her chin, and I thought at first that it was a mole. But we have done enough for to-day; we will finish at another time. [*To Don Pedro, who wishes to see the portrait*] No, do not look at anything yet. Have it carefully put aside, I pray; [*To Isidore*] and you, I beseech you, not to give way, and to keep your spirits up, in order that I may finish my work.

Isid. I shall reserve all the gaiety I can for this.[24]

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[23] See Appendix, Note J.

[24] One of the most usual contrivances on the stage is to see a lover disguising himself in order to get an opportunity of speaking with the

SCENE XIV.

DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

Isid. What say you ? This gentleman seems to me the most polite in the world ; and one must admit that the French have in them something so polished, so gallant, which other nations have not.

Don P. Yes ; but they have that against them that they are somewhat too free, and that, madcap-like, they are too fond of whispering sweet nothings to every woman whom they meet.

Isid. It is because they know that these things please the ladies.

Don P. True ; but if they please the ladies, they very much displease the gentlemen ; and one is not very glad to see one's wife or mistress openly courted to one's very face.

Isid. They do so only in sport.[25]

SCENE XV.

ZAIDE, DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

Zai. Ah! Sir, save me, I beseech you, from the hands of an enraged husband who is close upon my heels. His jealousy is incredible, and surpasses in its violence everything imaginable. He carries it so far as to wish me to be always veiled ; and for having found me with my face a little uncovered he has drawn his sword, and he has compelled me to throw myself upon you, and to ask for your protection

---

object of his love. Molière has employed it four times. In this play Adraste is a painter ; in *Love is the best Doctor* (See Vol. III., page 189), Clitandre is a physician ; in *The Physician in spite of himself*, (See Vol. III., p. 379), Leander is an apothecary ; and in *Le Malade Imaginaire* (see Vol. VI.), Cléante is a music master.

[25] See Appendix, Note K.

against his injustice. But I see him coming. For Heaven's sake, honoured Sir, save me from his fury!

Don P. [*To Zaide, pointing to Isidore*] Go in there with her, and fear nothing.

SCENE XVI.

ADRASTE, DON PEDRO.

Don P. What, sir, is it you? So much jealousy in a Frenchman. I fancied that only we were capable of such a thing.

Adr. The French always excel in everything they do; and, when we take it into our heads to be jealous, we are twenty times more so than a Sicilian. This infamous girl thinks to have found a safe refuge with you; but you are too sensible to blame my resentment. Allow me, I pray you, to treat her as she deserves.

Don P. Ah! for pity's sake, stop. The offence is too trifling for so much anger.

Adr. The extent of the offence lies not in the importance of the deed: it is in the transgression of the given orders; and in such matters that which is only a trifle becomes very criminal when it is forbidden.

Don P. To judge by what she has said, all that she has done was unintentional; and I pray you to be reconciled.

Adr. What! you take her part, you who are so particular in matters of that kind.

Don P. Yes, I take her part; and if you would oblige me, you will forget your anger, and be reconciled to each other. It is a favour which I ask of you, and I shall look upon it as an earnest of the friendship which I should like to subsist between us.

Adr. Under these conditions, I can refuse you nothing. I will do as you wish.

SCENE XVII.

ZAIDE, DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, *hidden in a corner of the stage.*

Don P. [*To Zaide*] Come along, I say. Only follow me, I have made your peace. You could not have fallen into better hands.

Zai. I am much more obliged to you than you think; but I shall take my veil; I shall take care not to appear before him without it.

SCENE XVIII.

DON PEDRO, ADRASTE.

Don P. She will be here directly; and I assure you that she seemed very glad when I told her that I had made it all right.

SCENE XIX.

ISIDORE, *with Zaide's veil,* ADRASTE, DON PEDRO.

Don P. Since you have consented to forego your resentment, allow me to make you shake hands together here; and to beg of you to live henceforth, for my sake, in a perfect understanding.

Adr. Yes, I promise you, that for your sake, I shall live on the best possible terms with her.

Don P. You oblige me greatly, and I shall bear it in mind.

Adr. I give you my word, Don Pedro, that out of consideration for you, I shall treat her with the utmost possible kindness.

Don P. You are really too kind. [*Alone*] It does one good to make matters pleasant and peaceful. Hullo, Isidore, come.

SCENE XX.

ZAIDE, DON PEDRO.

Don P. What is this! What means this?

Zai. [*Without her veil*] What means this? That a jealous man is a monster hated by all the world; and that everyone delights to annoy him for annoyance sake; that all the locks and bolts cannot keep people; and that the heart must be won by gentleness and kindness; that Isidore is in the hands of a gentleman whom she loves, and that you have been duped.

Don P. And shall Don Pedro suffer this mortal insult! No, no, I have too much courage; and I shall go and demand the assistance of the authorities to punish this perfidy to the utmost.[26] Here lives a senator. Hullo!

SCENE XXI.

A SENATOR, DON PEDRO.

Sen. Your servant, Don Pedro. How opportunely you come!

Don P. I come to complain to you of an insult which I have suffered.

Sen. I have just arranged the most beautiful masquerade in the world.

Don P. A treacherous Frenchman has played me a trick.

Sen. You have never, in all your life, seen anything so beautiful.

Don P. He has abducted a girl to whom I had given her freedom.

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[26] If a ballet ends this play, the stage changes here again to the market-place of the first scene. But when there is no ballet, the piece ends here.

Sen. They are people dressed like Moors, who dance admirably.

Don P. You may judge whether this is an insult which I ought to bear.

Sen. Most marvellous dresses, made expressly.

Don P. I demand the assistance of the authorities in this matter.

Sen. I wish you to see this. They are going to rehearse it to amuse the people.

Don P. What are you talking about?

Sen. I am speaking about my masquerade.

Don P. I am speaking of my affair.

Sen. I will not occupy myself about any matter, except pleasure, to-day. Come, gentlemen, come. Let us see whether it will go all right.

Don P. Plague take the fool, with his masquerade!

Sen. The deuce take the bore, with his affair!

SCENE XXII.

A SENATOR, TROUP OF DANCERS.

Entry of the Ballet.

Several dancers, dressed as Moors, dance before the Senator, and finish the comedy.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 53.

The first Scene of Molière's *Sicilian* is coarsely imitated as follows by Crowne in *The Country Wit* (Act i.). Hali is called in the English comedy Merry.

Merry. 'T is a very dark night! there 's not light enough to show me the end of my nose. What stays this master of mine so long? some new love-adventure, I 'll lay my life on 't; for nothing else could stay him, I 'm sure. Oh, 't is a brave universal lover! What pity 't is such a large, spacious soul, that holds such vast, prodigious quantities of love, should have but one body to vent it at: the vent is too narrow: all the convenience is, that it is never empty.——

. . . .

B, Page 54.

Crowne, in *The Country Wit* (Act i.), imitates as follows the third Scene of *The Sicilian*. Hali is Merry, and Adraste Ramble.

Enter RAMBLE *and music at one door:* RAMBLE *meets* MERRY.

Ramble. Who 's there? Merry?

Merry. Who should it be else? who walks the streets o' this time of nights but you or I, sir?

Ram. I have been staid by the bravest adventure.

Mer. I have not been idle, sir; I dare compare adventures with you for what you please.

Ram. I 'll tell thee mine anon.

Mer. And I 'll tell you mine, when you have a mind to laugh. Well, sir, my comfort is, you nor I shall not have much to answer for, for neglecting the talents Nature has given us; we have no loss of time lies on our consciences. While other lazy people sleep and take their ease, we are conscientiously labouring in the cause; and yet these wicked people censure us, and say we turn day into night, and night into day, and invert the order of Nature.

Ram. The order of Nature? the order of coxcombs! the order of Nature is to follow my appetite: am I to eat at noon, because it is noon, or because I am a hungry? To eat because a clock strikes, were to feed a clock, or the sun, and not myself. Let dull grave rogues observe distinction of seasons, eat because the sun shines, and when he

departs lie drown'd some nine hours in their own flegm; I will pay no such homage to the sun, and time, which are things below me; I am a superior being to them, and will make 'em attend my pleasure.

Mer. Most nobly resolv'd! how proud shall I be to have the sun my fellow-servant.

Ram. The world is Nature's house of entertainment, where men of wit and pleasure are her free guests, tied to no rules and orders. Fools indeed are her household-stuff, which she locks up, and brings forth at seasons; handsome fools are her pictures; studious, plotting, engineering fools are her mechanic implements; strong, laborious fools are her common utensils; valiant, bold fools are her armoury; and dull, insignificant fools are her lumber, which, by wars, plagues, and other conveniences, she often throws and sweeps out of the world.

Mer. Very well, sir. And pray what fool am I?

Ram. An amphibious creature, that livest in both elements of wit and fool; the major part of thee is fool; but that part of thee that is wit is true wit; and so thou art a nobler animal than many of those poor creatures that thou seest swim after men of wit and sense, for the scraps and orts of wit that fall from them; they leap and play out of the water, as high as they can, but they are but fish still; folly is their element, and there they must stay. I pity the poor poets; these creatures do but spoil our mirth, but they ruin the poets' labours. They are to them as the fox is to the badger; when the badger has with great pains scratch'd himself a hole, the fox comes and stinks him out of it. But enough of this.—Come, to the business in hand! however 't is in other affairs, I am for reducing love to the state of nature; I am for no propriety, but every man get what he can: however invasion in this case I am sure is lawful. When a pretty young woman lies in the possession of an old fellow, like a fair, fertile province under the dominion of the Turk, uncultivated and unenjoy'd, no good Christian but ought to make war upon him:—that mine is a kind of holy war, and I deserve a benediction. And so my musical pilgrims to your arms.

Mer. Sir, you will make the jealous old lord cut the pretty creature's throat.

Ram. Oh, sir, he loves his divertisement too well for that. Like an old cat that has been a good mouser in his time, he loves his prey though it be but to mew over it.—But look, I see a light!

Mer. I hear her voice too. I am sure 't is hers.

Ram. She's coming to the window! Rogues, run and light your flambeaux, or call a link that she may see me! [*To his Footmen.*

Mer. Up so late?

Ram. Ay, poor creature, she, like the rest of her sex, can have no rest in this world, neither with a man, nor without a man; not with a man, for if he be young he lets her have no rest; if he be old, she lets him have no rest; and without a man, to rest is impossible: so, poor souls, they have no rest in this life.—Hark, they are loud! let's listen.

C, Page 57.

The fifth scene of *The Sicilian* has been followed by Crowne in *The Country Wit* as follows (Act ii.).—Sir Thomas Rash and Lord Drybone both represent Don Pedro.

Enter SIR THOMAS RASH *in a buff coat, with a long sword by his side, followed by two or three Footmen with long swords.*

Sir Thomas Rash. Where is this Ramble and his fiddles?

1 *Footman.* I heard 'em, an't like your worship, but just now hereabouts.

Sir Tho. How shall I know they are his?—A company of rogues, to lay my buff coat out of the way, that I have lost Ramble while I have been looking for my coat. And you, sirrah, to let your torch go out.

[*To one of the Footmen.*

Ramble. What an unlucky puppy am I! She does not look out yet.

1 *Foot.* Sir, sir, an't like your worship, I see a heap of men at yonder door. I believe they are they.

Sir T. How shall I know that, sirrah? come along! I'll listen, and hear what they talk of. If it be Ramble I'll Ramble him; I'll teach him to come rambling and rumbling after my daughter.

2 *Footman.* O' my conscience, 'tis he, sir; for I heard the fiddles hereabout.

Sir T. Hold your tongue, you puppy! [*Listens.*

Enter LORD DRYBONE *in his night-gown, with a sword in his hand.*

Lord D. So, they are here still? I was afraid they were gone. Now shall I discover who they are. [*Goes behind them and peeps.*

Mer. She's gone to bed, sir! she will not come out any more to-night.

Ram. How unlucky was this!

Sir T. I have found him, i' faith; that's Ramble's voice, and that's my daughter they talk of: she has promised to come out to him, it seems. Here's brave doings! I'll make somebody smart. Rogues, be ready when I give the word. Let me peep whereabouts he is.

[*Sir T. peeps.*

Lord Drybone. So, so, they expect to steal her out? Oh, brave whore! Who can this be? let me peep! [*Peeps about Sir T. and Sir T. about Lord D.*] A fellow in a buff coat! and, by what I can perceive, an old fellow too. What, has she intrigues with Hectors, and old Hectors? methinks an old rich lord should be as good as an old poor Hector.

Sir T. Ha! in his night-gown? just ready to chop to bed to her when she comes. They have made a match to lie together here to-night. Oh, sweet virtuous Madam Christina, I have bred you up to fine purpose! I'll stay till you come, to give my blessing on you both together.

Mer. Come, sir, you had as good go to your repose; the jealous old coxcomb does so watch her water, that she cannot get out.

Lord D. The jealous old coxcomb? Oh, brave! what rogue is this?

Sir T. The jealous old coxcomb? sirrah, your throat shall be cut for this.

Ram. Pox on him for me! he has made me lose a night fatigue.

Lord D. Pox on him!

Sir T. Pox on him! yes, I'll give you five thousand pound with my daughter to bid a pox on me,—I will.

Mer. Sir, sir, whate'er the business is, the door is open. If you will, I'll enter softly, and see what it means.

Ram. Do, oh do, prithee dear Merry! Oh, heav'n grant—

Lord D. Stealing to the door! [*Lord Drybone gets betwixt Merry and the door.*] Who's there? [*He gives Merry a box o' th' ear.*

Mer. A friend! [*Merry strikes him again.*

Lord D. Ho, Peter, George, ho! my people, ho!

D, Page 58.

Dibdin, in his *Metamorphoses*, has partly followed the fourth and fifth scenes of Molière's *Sicilian*. Hali is called Fabio; Adraste, Lysander; and Isidore, Marcella.

Enter FABIO.

Fabio. The next song in the book is the cruel guardian, or the fortunate runaway; the next song in the book is Philomelo's soft notes; the next song in the book is Come all you Swains and hear my lay; the next song in the book is the cobbler or a wife of ten thousand. Listen, neighbours, this is one of the curiousest ditties.

AIR.

I.

'T was in a village, near Castlecary,
A cobler and his wife did dwell;
And for a time no two so merry,
Their happiness no tongue can tell:
But to this couple the neighbours tell us,
Something did happen that caus'd much strife,
For going to a neighbouring alehouse,
The man got drunk and beat his wife.

II.

But though he treated her so vilely,
What did this wise, good creature do;
Kept snug, and form'd a method slily,
To wring his heart quite through and through;

For Dick the tapster, and his master,
By the report that then was rife,
Were both in hopes by this disaster,
To gain the cobler's pretty wife.

III.

While things went on to rack and ruin,
And all their furniture was sold,
She seem'd t' approve what each was doing,
And got from each a purse of gold:
So when the cobler's cares were over,
He swore to lead an alter'd life,
To mind his work, ne'er be a rover,
And love no other but his wife.

DON PEDRO *and* MARCELLA *above at a window.*

Fab. Faith, sir, the noise has brought her to the window.

Lysander. Dear Marcella, how shall I express to you my gratitude, for that anxiety you have endured on my account, but take courage and a little time will relieve you from all your apprehensions; we have plann'd a scheme that cannot fail of success.

Marcella. You must be very cautious, I assure you, for all that passes, by some means or other, comes to my guardian's knowledge.—Good heaven, he's behind me.—Indeed, good men, I have nothing for you, and I assure you your situation is not more distressing than mine.

Don P. Talking to ballad singers out of the window; and, I suppose, they are as much ballad singers as that Jackanapes was a sailor.—Go along, hang dogs, or I'll make you sing in a cage, I will.

Fab. Nay, good your honour, we'll present you with the jealous Spaniard outwitted.

Don P. Come in, you sha'n't hear it.

Mar. Nay, pray let me listen to the song, there can be no harm in that.

Fab. 'T is a dialogue between the lover and his mistress. My poor wife that is dead, wou'd have given you the woman's part to a nicety; however, you shall have it as near her manner as possible. Come, Guzman, strike up.

Don P. What, you won't begone—I'll come down and see what authority my cane has with you. Get you in. [*To* Marcella.]

Fab. He's coming, sir; let us decamp.

Lys. Now for one bold effort, Fabio, and we shall be masters of the town.

Fab. Never doubt the victory while I am general.

AIR.

I.

Befriend me every tender power,
A lover's hopes befriend;
Be this the bright auspicious hour,
When all my cares shall end;
When dread suspicion's far away,
So sweetly I'll beguile,
In rapture ev'ry passing day,
To see Marcella smile.

II.

The heaviest chains are easy borne,
The culprit once repriev'd;
And though I'm from my fair one torne,
My bosom is reliev'd;
For dread suspicion's far away,
I sweetly shall beguile,
In rapture ev'ry passing day,
To see Marcella smile. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DON PEDRO.

Don P. A pack of rascals, . . . if I catch you, I'll mar your music. [*Coming on.*] How! gone?

E, Page 65.

In Molière's *Sicilian* (Scene 10) the master, Adraste (Ramble), invents the stratagem, but in *Country Wit* (Act iii.) it is the servant, Merry, who invents it.

Enter MERRY.

Ramble. Oh, Merry, I am ruin'd!

Merry. Oh, sir, you are a happy man! I have not time to ask you the success of your last adventure, I am so transported with the pleasure of the present. Cannot you limn, sir!

Ram. Limn, what dost thou mean?

Mer. Why limn, sir; draw pictures in little.

Ram. I draw pictures?

Mer. Yes, sir, you can, sir.

Ram. But I cannot, sir.

Mer. But you can, sir, you can limn, and you must limn, and you shall limn, sir. Coming along by Charing Cross, who should it be my fortune to meet with but Mr Drawell, the limner, going in all haste to my Lord Drybone's, to draw Mrs Frisque's picture—and what comes into my head, sir, but to beg of him to write an apology for not coming,

and send you with it to perform the work in his stead; and to prevail with him I promis'd him the gain of the picture, without the trouble.

Ram. Thou hast undone me, seduced me from the ways of virtue and constancy, just as I was entering into 'em; I am not able to resist the temptation of this plot. But how shall I manage it? for I can no more make the picture of a face, than I can make a face; I have not so much skill as a man may learn out of the Complete Gentleman, and other elaborate pieces that teach that faculty.

Mer. No, sir? did I not hear you the other day in a mercer's shop promise his wife her picture, in the presence of several ladies, and the good man scrap'd you many legs, to express his extraordinary sense of so great a favour, and said he would wait upon you, with his wife, at your chamber?

Ram. Thou say'st right! glowing with extreme appetite to her, my tongue and brain overheated with motion, in the stream and whirlpool of thought and babble, I very impudently invited her to sit to me for her picture, and the foolish cuckold her husband did accordingly bring her, and leave her with me; where, when I had squeez'd his orange, I gave him the rind again; and requited him with the shadow of it, drawn by one that could perform it.

Mer. Can you not draw then, sir? what shall we do? our plot is spoil'd.

Ram. Not at all, sir; I can draw well enough for my purpose. By this plot I may draw her as I did the mercer's wife; that is I may draw her to my chamber, that 's enough.

Mer. That 's very well thought on, and, to continue the quibble, this plot will give you a colour to visit her.

Ram. Well quibbled again! where 's the apology? is that as witty?

Mer. A good, honest, plain, country apology. [*Gives him a letter.*

Ram. Come along, Merry! thou must help in this business. Well, I must turn thee away before thy wicked counsels have undone me.

Mer. Indeed, sir, it is ill done of me, but it is done out of pure pity, like a good natur'd nurse, that cannot forbear giving a feverish creature, that is ready to die of thirst, what drink they crave. I cannot for my life hear you groan after a wench night and day so pitifully, and not help you. [*Exeunt.*

F, Page 66.

Crowne, in *The Country Wit,* has altered slightly the tenth scene of *The Sicilian:* Isidore for the nonce is called Betty Frisque, and Don Pedro, Lord Drybone.

The SCENE, *a Chamber.*

Lord Drybone. Go, go, hussy! you are an unkind naughty girl, to make me pay thus dear for every smile and smirk I get from you. I

dare safely say not a dimple you make when you smile, that does not cost me, one with another, forty pound a dimple.

Betty. 'T is your own fault, my dear lord! you will be chiding o' one, and quarrelling with one.

Lord D. Chiding o' one, and quarrelling with one? ay, and I had better quarrel on. I am a fool to buy peace so dear, considering what a poor trade I have and how little I get by it.

Betty. People that cannot barter commodity for commodity, must send money in specie. You know they do it all the world over.

Lord D. But that's a very ruinous trade. One had better war with such a country, and forbid all traffic with it, my dear Frisky.

Betty. Ay, if one can live without it, my dear lord, you.

Lord D. Come, no more of this, prepare to sit! Mr Drawell's a-coming. I am glad you like your point and jewel, it puts you in good humour, and makes you the fitter to sit.

Enter CISS.

Ciss. There's one below from Mr Drawell desires to speak with your lordship.

Lord D. How! has he fail'd me again? what an unworthy fellow it is, he shall never draw it now though he will do it for nothing.

Betty. May be he has not fail'd you, my lord. Send for the man up, and know his message.

Lord D. Let the man come up: [*Exit Ciss.*] These sort of fellows, if they grow anything famous, they grow so saucy with it that they are not to be endured.

G, Page 66.

The twelfth scene of *The Sicilian* (Act 4) is imitated by Crowne in *The Country Wit*, as follows; Don Pedro is called in the English play Lord Drybone; Isidore, Betty Frisque; and Adraste, Ramble.

Enter RAMBLE, *disguised.*

Ram. I come from Mr Drawell, my lord! he sends this letter by me to your lordship. [*Gives him a letter.*

[LORD DRYBONE *opens the letter and reads.*

My noble Lord—Fortune maliciously, just as I was upon the way a-coming,—I have, by much importunacy, obtain'd the extraordinary kindness of this gentleman, to come in my room, one of the first men in the world, formerly my scholar; have a care, I beseech your lordship, not to speak to him of any recompense, for he is a gentleman of quality, and draws only for his own divertisement,—Your Lordship's humble servant,

DRAWELL.

Betty. This gentleman comes to draw my picture? I know him. I love him for this piece of ingenuity, I swear. [*Aside.*

Lord D. Sir, this is a great favour! indeed, I will assure you, sir, I take it for a great honour. See, sir, this is the person whom I recommend to your skill. [*Ramble salutes her.*

Betty. I receive this favour with a great deal of satisfaction; this is an honour beyond expectation. I could not hope for such an illustrious limner.

Ram. If I had no skill at all, so beautiful a person would inspire me.

Betty. Oh! sir, I rather need all the favour your pencil can afford; your excellent skill must hide the faults and defects of nature.

Ram. Nature, madam, has not committed one the pencil must for ever despair of.

Lord D. Come, enough of this, if you please sir, let alone these compliments, and to your business; this is not at all to the purpose.

Betty. If your pencil, sir, flatters as much as your tongue, the picture you will draw will not at all resemble me.

Ram. Heaven that made the original has taken away all means of flattery.

Betty. Heaven that made!—

Lord D. I say I will have no more compliments. Come, sir, if you please, begin your work.

Ram. I am ready! [*Pulls out his pencils, colours, and palate.*

Betty. Where shall I place myself, sir?

Ram. Here, madam! this place receives the light best of any we shall find.

Betty. Do I sit right? [*She sits.*

Ram. Indifferent, madam; a little more upright, if you please, a little more this way, your body turn'd thus; lift up your head, that the beauty of your neck may appear, your breast bare, thus,—[*Goes and feels her breasts*] Very well, a little more,—more yet—

Lord D. What a pudder is here! I do not like all this; cannot you sit as you should?

Betty. This is all new to me, I never sat before. 'Tis the gentleman's business to place me, let him set me how he will.

Ram. You sit admirable well, madam! keep yourself thus.

Lord D. So, sir, pray to your seat.

Ram. A little more towards me, madam, your eyes always on me. I beseech you, madam, your looks fixed to me.

Betty. Now, sir, pray do not flatter me! I am none of those women, who, if pictures be but handsome, they care not whether they be like or no; one fine handsome picture might serve 'em all; for all demand the same things, fine features, and delicate complexion. For my part I desire no charity at all, let my picture be but like and I desire no more.

Ram. You are so rich in beauty, that the pencil can add nothing to you; it may possibly detract, it cannot flatter. Ah, what sweetness

is there! what charms! I undertake a bold work to represent those perfections. [*Talks and paints*] I remember a story of Apelles: Apelles once drew the picture of a mistress of Alexander the Great; and, as he was painting her, fell so passionately in love with her, that he was ready to die. Alexander, out of pure generosity, bestowed her upon him. I could do as Apelles did; but my lord, I am afraid your lordship will not prove an Alexander the Great.

Lord D. Come, sir, I pray proceed in your painting! we have neither of us any business with Alexander the Great that I know of.

Ram. If Alexander the Great were by, he should not hinder me from saying, I never saw anything so charming, so—

Lord D. Sir, in plain terms, you talk too much in my opinion, and do not at all mind your pencil.

Ram. My lord, on the contrary, I discourse out of regard to my pencil; to quicken the spirits, and put a briskness and gaiety in the face.

H, Page 69.

Crowne, in *The Country Wit* (Act v.), imitates Hali's disguise as a Spanish gentleman (Scene 13), as follows:—

Enter MERRY, *running dressed like an Attorney, with a green bag under his arm.*

Lord D. How now, what would this fellow have? Who let him in without my acquaintance?

Mer. I beg your lordship's pardon for my rude pressing in, I am unknown to your lordship, but I have business of extraordinary concern to your lordship, which I must acquaint you of with all speed.

Lord D. Business of extraordinary concern to me? what is it?

Mer. I must impart it to your lordship in private.

Lord D. We are private enough here. I won't go out of the room, for I don't like this picture drawer. [*Aside.*

Mer. Look you, my lord; ay, this is it; no, [*Draws him aside, and whispers, and produces several long scrolls*], this is not it: ay, this is it! no, no, ay, now I come to it. [*Ramble starts from his feet, and falls on his knees before Betty, watching Lord Drybone still.*

Lord D. I would thou wert come to it at once.

Ram. Oh, charming creature! if you have any pity in your soul, save the life of a poor languishing lover, that has been dying for you these two months. I have expressed my love to you by signs, and you have regarded them, and now I have studied this way, to tell you in more intelligible manner how much I love, admire, adore you, above all the creatures of the world, above all I can express, and shall, as long as I live; but that life will not exceed this minute, if you put me not instantly out of despair.

Betty. I know you, sir, I have observ'd you, I confess, and do further acknowledge, your love is not unpleasing to me, but it is impossible for me to give you any satisfaction.

Ram. If you say the word, it is, and shall be possible, nay, it shall be impossible to hinder it.

Betty. But, sir, I am a close prisoner, and cannot stir out to save my own life, and much less yours.

Ram. Now you speak unkindly, for I have seen you abroad.

Betty. It may be so, but, like a prisoner in the king's bench, never without my keeper.

Ram. You can shake off your keeper, if you please.

Betty. My lord and I now are upon pretty good terms; where do you lodge?

Ram. At the brazier's in the Mall.

Betty. Be within about two in the afternoon.

Ram. Divine creature!

Betty. But hope for nothing but a visit, for there will be more words to a bargain than these. I will have a farther trial of love, and I will have a better love than perhaps you intend.

Ram. Oh, heavenly creature! you shall have as much as you can hold.

Lord D. How now, Mr Painter, what are you doing there?

Ram. Is this a mole, madam, or a little speck of dirt?

Lord D. A mole, madam! I' Gad, this same picture drawer—

Mer. Now, my lord, if the conveyances be drawn thus.

Lord D. Prithee, ha' done with thy conveyances, for I do not understand one word thou say'st.

Mer. No, my lord? look you, I'll make it plain.

Lord D. Well, if thou mak'st it never so plain, what is all this to me?

Mer. Not to you, my lord? why are not you my Lord Buck's?

Lord D. No, nor my Lord Doe neither.

Mer. What a rascal was the porter to tell me this was the Lord Buck's!

Lord D. What a rascal was you, sirrah, to come to trouble me!

Betty. Begone! my lord 's jealous, and grows into choller. If he grows out of humour, our plot 's spoil'd. [*Exit Merry*] [*To Ramble.*

Ram. Well, madam! enough for once.

Lord D. Yes, sir, and too much.

Ram. To-morrow I will wait on you again.

Lord D. I shall desire your pardon, you have done enough; too much at this time to come here any more.

Betty. How, no more? what, shall he not finish my picture?

Lord D. You mean my picture. 'Tis you that sit, but 'tis my picture that must be drawn, and in an ugly shape too.

I, Page 69.

Dibdin in his *Metamorphoses* thus imitates the thirteenth scene of Molière's *Sicilian.*

Enter FABIO, *in a rich Spanish dress, and* LYSANDER.

Fabio. Sir, your servant; I don't believe I have the honour to be known to you; but understanding your reputation for courage, and hearing you are generally engaged in an affair of honour about once a week——

Don Pedro. Me, sir! I assure you, whoever told you so deceived you —— there is not a more peaceable man living——

Fab. Ah, Sir! that is your modesty, there is not a truer sign of courage in the world; you'll find I have a great deal of it myself.—My name is Don Valasquez D'Avolos; the history of Spain must have inform'd you of my consequence.

Don P. It has, sir.—The devil fetch me if ever I heard of you before.

Fab. Well, sir, I come to ask your advice upon a point of honour.—This way, if you please, that nobody may hear us. [*While* Fabio *draws off Don* Pedro, Lysander *slips into the house.*] You must know, Sir, that I have receiv'd a slap on the face; I suppose, Sir, you know what a slap on the face is, when it is given with an open hand in the middle of the cheek.—Now, Sir, this slap o' the face sticks mightily in my stomach, and I am in doubt whether to revenge the affront, I ought to fight my man or have him assassinated.

Don P. Assassination is the surest and shortest way.

Fab. Well but, Sir.

Don P. Sir, you have my opinion, and I kiss your hands.

Fab. One word, Sir.

Don P. I'm in a great hurry, Sir, and——

Fab. Well, Sir, your humble servant; I am infinitely obliged to you, and when you receive a slap o' the face I shall as freely give my advice. . . . I hope master has made good use of his time. [*Exit.*

J, Page 71.

Sir Richard Steele, in *The Tender Husband* (Act iv. Scene 2), thus imitated the twelfth scene of Molière's *Sicilian.* Adraste is called Captain Clerimont, and Isidore is the Niece.

Enter AUNT *and* CAPTAIN. CLERIMONT *disguis'd.*

Aunt. This, Sir, is the Lady, whom you are to draw.—You see, Sir, as good Flesh and Blood as a Man would desire to put in Colours.—I must have her maiden Picture.

Hump. Then the Painter must make haste—Ha, Cousin!

Niece. Hold thy Tongue, good Sagage.

Clerimont. Madam, I 'm generally forc'd to new-mould every Feature, and mend Nature's Handy-work; but here she has made so finish'd an Original, that I despair of my copy's coming up to it.

Aunt. Do you hear that, Niece?

Niece. I don't desire you to make Graces where you find none.

Cler. To see the difference of the Fair Sex!—I protest to you, Madam, my Fancy is utterly exhausted with inventing Faces for those that sit to me. The first Entertainment I generally meet with, are Complaints for want of sleep; They never look'd so pale in their Lives, as when they sit for the Pictures—Then so many Touches and Retouches, when the Face is finish'd—That Wrinkle ought not to have been, those Eyes are too languid, that Colour's too weak, that Side-look hides the Mole on the left Cheek. In short, the whole likeness is struck out: But in you, Madam, the highest I can come up to will be but rigid Justice.

Hump. A comical Dog this!

Aunt. Truly, the Gentleman seems to understand his Business.

Niece. Sir, if your Pencil flatters like your Tongue, you are going to draw a Picture that won't be at all like me. Sure I have heard that voice somewhere. [*Aside.*

Cler. Madam, be pleas'd to place yourself near me, nearer still, Madam, here falls the best Light—You must know, Madam, there are three kinds of Airs which the Ladies most delight in—There is your Haughty—your Mild—and your Pensive Air—The Haughty may be express'd with the Head a little more erect than ordinary, and the Countenance with a certain Disdain in it, so as she may appear almost, but not quite, inexorable: This kind of Air is generally heightened with a little knitting of the Brows—I gave my Lady Scornwell her choice of a dozen Frowns, before she could find one to her liking.

Niece. But what is the Mild Air?

Cler. The mild Air is compos'd of a Languish, and a Smile—But if I might advise, I 'd rather be a Pensive Beauty; the Pensive usually feels her Pulse, leans on one Arm, or sits ruminating with a Book in her Hand—which Conversation she is suppos'd to chuse, rather than the endless Importunities of Lovers.

Hump. A Comical Dog——

Aunt. Upon my word he understands his Business well; I'll tell you, Niece, how your Mother was drawn—She had an Orange in her Hand, and a Nosegay in her Bosom, but a Look so pure and fresh-colour'd, you'd have taken her for one of the Seasons.

Cler. You seem indeed, Madam, most inclin'd to the Pensive. The Pensive delights also in the fall of Waters, pastoral Figures, or any rural View suitable to a fair Lady, who with a delicate Spleen has retir'd from the World, as sick of its Flattery and Admiration.

Niece. No—since there is room for Fancy in a Picture, I would be drawn like the Amazon *Thalestris*, with a Spear in my Hand, and an

Helmet on a Table before me. At a distance behind let there be a Dwarf, holding by the Bridle a Milk-white Palfrey.

Cler. Madam, the Thought is full of Spirit, and if you please, there shall be a *Cupid* stealing away your Helmet, to shew that Love shou'd have a Part in all gallant Actions.

Niece. That Circumstance may be very Picturesque.

Cler. Here, Madam, shall be your own Picture, here the Palfrey, and here the Dwarf. The Dwarf must be very little, or we shan't have room for him.

Niece. A Dwarf cannot be too little.

Cler. I'll make him a Blackamore, to distinguish him from the other too powerful Dwarf. [*Sighs*] the *Cupid*——I'll place that beauteous Boy near you, 'twill look very Natural. He'll certainly take you for his Mother *Venus*.

Niece. I leave these Particulars to your own Fancy.

Cler. Please, Madam, to uncover your Neck a little; a little lower still—a little, little lower.

Niece. I'll be drawn thus, if you please, Sir.

Cler. Ladies, have you heard the News of a late Marriage between a young Lady of a great Fortune, and a younger Brother of a good Family?

Aunt. Pray, Sir, how is it?

Cler. This young Gentleman, Ladies, is a particular Acquaintance of mine, and much about my Age and stature; (look me full in the face, Madam,) he accidentally met the young Lady, who had in her all the Perfections of her Sex; (hold up her Head, Madam, that's right,) she let him know that his Person and Discourse were not altogether disagreeable to her. The Difficulty was how to gain a second Interview, (your Eyes full upon mine, Madam) for never was there such a Sigher in all the Vallies of *Arcadia*, as that unfortunate youth, during the absence of her he lov'd.

Aunt. A-lack-a-day, poor young Gentleman.

Niece. It must be he—what a charming Amour is this!

Cler. At length, Ladies, he bethought himself of an Expedient; he dress'd himself just as I am now, and came to draw her Picture, (your Eyes full upon mine, pray Madam.)

Hump. A subtle Dog, I warrant him.

Cler. And by that means found an Opportunity of carrying her off, and marrying her.

Aunt. Indeed your Friend was a very vicious young Man.

Niece. Yet perhaps the young Lady was not displeas'd at what he had done.

Cler. But, Madam, what were the Transports of the Lover, when she made him that Confession?

Niece. I daresay she thought herself very happy, when she got out of her Guardian's Hands.

Aunt. 'Tis very true, Niece. There are abundance of those Headstrong young Baggages about Town.

Cler. The Gentleman has often told me, he was strangely struck at first sight; but when she sat to him for her Picture, and assum'd all those Graces that are proper for the Occasion, his Torment was so exquisite, his Passion so violent, that he could not have liv'd a Day, had he not found means to make the Charmer of his Heart his own.

Hump. 'Tis certainly the foolishest thing in the World to stand shilly-shally about a Woman, when one has a Mind to marry her.

Cler. The young Painter turn'd Poet on the subject; I believe I have the Words by heart.

Niece. A Sonnet! pray repeat it.

1.

While gentle Parthenissa *walks,*
And sweetly Smiles, and gaily Talks,
A thousand Shafts around her fly,
A thousand Swains unheeded die.

2.

If then she labours to be seen,
With all her killing Air and Mien;
From so much Beauty, so much Art,
What Mortal can secure his Heart?

Hump. I fancy if 'twas sung, 'twould make a very pretty catch.

Cler. My Servant has a voice, you shall hear it. [*Here 'tis sung.*

Aunt. Why this is pretty? I think a Painter should never be without a good singer. It brightens the Features strangely. I proffess I am mightily pleas'd, I'll but just step in, and give some Orders, and be with you presently. [*Exit.*

Niece. Was not this adventurous Painter call'd Clerimont?

Cler. It was Clerimont the Servant Parthenissa; but let me beseech that beauteous Maid to resolve and make the Incident I feign'd to her a real one—Consider, Madam, you are inviron'd by cruel and treacherous Guards, which would force you to a disagreeable Marriage, your case is exactly the same with the Princess of the Leontines in Clelia.

Niece. How can we commit such a solecism against all Rules! What! in the first Leaf of our History to have the Marriage? You know it cannot be.

Cler. The pleasantest part of the History will be after Marriage.

Niece. No, I never yet read of a Knight that entered Tilt or Tournament after Wedlock—'tis not to be expected—when the Husband begins, the Hero ends; all that noble Impulse to Glory, all the generous Passion for Adventures is consum'd in the Nuptial Torch; I don't know how it is, but Mars and Hymen never hit it.

Hump. [*Listening*] Consum'd in the Nuptial Torch! Mars and Hymen! What can all this mean? I am very glad I can hardly read. They could never get these foolish Fancies into my Head—I had always a strong Brain. [*Aside*] Harky, Cousin, is not this Painter a comical Dog?

Niece. I think he's very agreeable Company.

Hump. Why, then, I'll tell you what—marry him,—a painter's a very genteel calling. He's an ingenious Fellow and certainly Poor. I fancy he'd be glad on't; I'll keep my Aunt out of the Room a Minute or two, that's all the time you have to consider. [*Exit.*

Cler. Fortune points out to us this only occasion of our Happiness: Love's of Cœlestial Origine, and needs no long Acquaintance to be manifest. Lovers like Angels speak by Intuition,—Their Souls are in their Eyes.

Niece. Then I fear he sees mine. [*Aside*] But I can't think of abridging our Amours, and cutting off all farther decoration of Disguise, Serenade, and Adventure.

Cler. Nor would I willingly lose the Merit of long Services, midnight Sighs, and plaintiff Solitudes, were there not a necessity.

Niece. Then, to be seiz'd by Stealth!

Cler. Why, Madam, you are a great Fortune, and should not be married the common way. Indeed, Madam, you ought to be stolen, nay, in strictness, I don't know but you ought to be ravish'd.

Niece. But then our History will be so short.

Cler. I grant it, but you don't consider there's a Device in another's leading you instead of this person that's to have you; and, Madam, tho' our Amours can't furnish out a Romance, they'll make a very pretty Novel. Why smiles my Fair?

Niece. I am almost of opinion that had Oroondates been as pressing as Clerimont, Cassandra had been but a Pocket-Book: But it looks so ordinary to go out at a Door to be married. Indeed I ought to be taken out of a window, and run away with.

Enter HUMPHEY *and* POUNCE.

Hump. Well, Cousin, the Coach is at the Door, if you please, I'll lead you.

Niece. I put myself into your Hands, good Savage; but you promise to leave me.

Hump. I tell you plainly, you must not think of having me.

Pounce. [*To Cler.*] You'll have opportunity enough to carry her off; the old Fellows will be busie with me; I'll gain the Time I can, but be bold and prosper.

Niece. Clerimont, you follow us.

Cler. Upon the Wings of Love.

K, Page 72.

Dibdin, in his *Metamorphoses*, imitates as follows the last two scenes of Molière's *Sicilian*.

Enter JULETTA, *disguised and veiled.*

Jul. Oh! good Sir, save me from a furious husband, who pursues me; his jealousy is incredible, and works him up to an excess beyond imagination: he goes so far as to insist upon my always going uncover'd, he snatch'd up his sword, and would have kill'd me, Sir, if I had not flown to your house for protection.

Don P. There was something, then, in this last affair, I see.

Jul. Oh, Heavens! here he comes: save me, good Sir, from this fury.

Don P. Take her to your bed-chamber, Marcella; fear nothing, Madam. [*Exeunt Marcella and Juletta.*

Enter LYSANDER.

Lys. So, Sir, I had cause for what I said; deliver her up to my just resentment this instant, or meet it yourself.

Don P. Good Sir, be a little patient, the offence is too small for such violent anger.

Lys. How, Sir! do you take her part? You, who are so delicate upon these sort of things.

Don P. No, Sir, I don't take her part; but if you could be friends with her it would be a charity, for the poor creature seems frightened out of her senses.

Lys. Don Pedro, will it oblige you if I forgive her?

Don P. Truly it will; for I love to see peace and harmony between married people.

Lys. 'Tis enough: I'll lay by my anger and my sword together.

Don P. I'll bring her to you.

Lys. This is the bright moment that rewards me for all my pains and anxiety. [*Aside.*

Enter MARCELLA.

Don P. You may appear, I have made your peace. . . . . Here she comes. . . . You'll promise me now not to relapse.

Lys. I do, Sir. [*Marcella here comes on, with Juletta's veil.*

Don P. Poor soul; how she trembles! You really, Sir, should not put yourself in these violent passions. You have nothing to apprehend, Madam; your husband is entirely pacified. Come, Sir, since you are so kind to abandon your resentment at my request, allow me to join your hands, and to conjure you both, at my desire, to live in perfect union for the future.

Lys. Sir, there's no refusing, and I promise you, since you desire it, I'll endeavour to make her the best husband in the world.'

Don P. Sir, you give me pleasure to hear you say so.

Lys. Nay, no ceremony, Sir.

Don P. Pray, give me leave to see you out . . . . for I half suspect that this is a [*Aside.*] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, THE STREET—DON PEDRO *seeing* LYSANDER *and* MARCELLA *out.*

Don P. I do assure you, Sir, you have no obligation to me. . . . . I wish you a good——

Lys. Sir, I can't express how happy you've made me. . . . Come, my love, I promise you that all our strife shall end from this moment. [*They go off.*

Don P. Really one receives a pleasure in doing a friendly office for any one. . . . . How loving they seem. . . . . Well, I'll go and secure Marcella's obedience. . . . Nay! what's the meaning of this?

Enter JULETTA, *disguised and without her veil.*

Jul. Why, Sir, the meaning is, that a jealous man's a monster hated by the whole world; that all the locks and bolts in the universe are not capable of holding us; that the heart should be secured by gentleness and complaisance; that Marcella is in the hands of a gentleman; and that you are caught for a dupe.

Don P. If there's justice to be had in Spain, I'll be revenged——she shan't have a shilling of the fortune——they shall sue me for it, however; and then, if I am obliged to part with it, I'll hang myself, that I mayn't have the mortification of seeing them enjoy it——zounds! I'll hang myself at any rate——I'll have them all assassinated——I'll——I don't know what I'll do. [*Exit.*

TARTUFFE; OU, L'IMPOSTEUR.

COMÉDIE.

TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)

AUGUST 5TH, 1667.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

HYPOCRISY has at all times been a legitimate subject of satire in modern society. In classical literature, such a vice seems to have been unknown; for it can develop itself only in the midst of a society based, or pretending to be based, upon religion. Wherever indifference in matters of religion existed among the ancients, the hypocrite must have been rare; for his outward adornment of wise and moral saws could have been of no service to him. But as soon as religion became part and parcel of the State policy, men found it convenient and profitable to shelter their vices under a cloak of outward decorum, and tried to make the best of both worlds; but, above all, of this one. Literary men were not slow in describing this new character; and from the middle ages down to the present time, in all climes and in all countries, the hypocrite appears on the scene. He plays the principal part in the *Fabliaux;* and whether as an incontinent hermit, a lecherous chaplain, an intriguing monk, or a faithless confessor, he is always described in bold, but rather coarse, strokes, and gets generally punished and jeered at in the end. We find him in some of the early German satirical poems; and in the latter part of the epic, *Reynard the Fox.* Rutebeuf, a *trouvère* of the thirteenth century, gives us, in the *Chanson des Ordres,* the portrait of a Pharisee, who seems an ancestor of Tartuffe, and who goes about in a large plain woollen gown, with a thin and pale face, austere mien and words, and who has the ambition of a lion, the claws of a leopard, and the malice of a scorpion.

In the continuation of *The Romaunt of the Rose,* by Jean de Meung, appears Faux Semblaunt, an ancestor of Tartuffe, whom Chaucer, in his translation, makes speak as follows:

> "Now am I knight, now chastelaine,
> Now prelate, and now chaplaine,
> Now priest, now clerke, now fostere,
> Now am I master, now schollere.
> Now monke, now chanon, now baily,
> What ever mister man am I . . . .
> Well can I beare me under wede,
> Unlike is my word to my dede."

The conversation between Love and Faux Semblaunt is also from the same *Romaunt*, and shows the perfect hypocrite.

"Tell forth, and shame thee never adele,
For as thine habit sheweth wele,
Thou servest an holy hermite."
"Sooth is, but I am but an hypocrite,
Thou goest and preachest poverte?"
"Yea, sir, but Richesse hath poste,
Thou preachest abstinence also?"
"Sir, I woll fillen, so mote I go,
My paunche of good meat and wine,
As should a maister of divine,
For how that I me poore fame,
Yet all poore folke I disdaine."

Boccaccio, in his *Decameron*, describes several times the hypocrite, and Machiavelli, in his play, the *Mandragore*, acted in 1515 before the Pope and his Court, sketches a monkish pander, who lays down, in rather broad language, the maxim that the intentions of a man are everything, and that his actions are nothing.

About the same time, there was played in France *la Farce des Brus*, in which friar Ancelot and friar Anselme are still more cynical than their prototype, friar Timoteo. In the *Satyre Ménippée*, the hypocrite also appears, but full of sedition, and warlike. Mathurin Regnier describes, in the eighteenth of his Satires, Macette, a hypocritical lady, in the following words: "Night and day she goes from convent to convent, visits the holy places, confesses herself often. . . . . She dwells and lives apart from the world; her penitent eyes weep only holy water." Such is her portrait: but this is what she herself says: "That is why I disguise the up-wellings of my heart, envelop my ardour in sackcloth and ashes, and hide my purpose, which is to abandon myself to pleasures. A concealed sin is half forgiven; the fault does not lie only in its being forbidden, but scandal and disgrace are the causes of the offence. Provided it be not known, no matter how, as long as we can deny it, we sin not at all. Moreover, the goodness of Heaven is greater than our offences, and provided we confess, we are always pardoned." The portrait is more odious, but is not very unlike *Tartuffe*.

In Pascal's *Provinciales*, the Jesuitical hypocrite is also well described. All this tends to prove that of *Tartuffe* can be said what may be stated of all masterpieces of the human intellect,—that it is the most finished and best expressed result of a series of more or less complete ideas, which, for ages, men have attempted to shape into a certain form.

Molière evidently owes something to a tragi-comic tale of Scarron, called *The Hypocrites*. In this tale, the author relates how a certain adventurer, called Montufar, and two queans, the younger of whom was named Helen, and the older Mendez, resolved to take advantage of the credulity of the inhabitants of Sevilla, by pretending to be devout.

"They alighted within a league of the city, and having satisfied the muleteer, got thither about the dusk of the evening, and took up their lodgings at the first inn they found. Montufar hired a house, furnished it with very ordinary furniture, and dressed himself all in black, with a cassock and a cloak of the same colour. Helen assumed the habit of a religious sister, that had devoted herself to pious works, and Mendez went dressed like a saint, valuing herself upon her hoary locks, and a huge monstrous chaplet, each bead of which was big enough to load a demi-culverin. The very next day after their arrival, Montufar showed himself in the street, apparelled as I have already described him, marching with his arms across, and looking on the ground whenever he met any woman. He cried out, with a voice shrill enough to have rent a rock, 'Blessed be the holy sacrament of the altar, and the thrice happy conception of the immaculate virgin!' and uttered many more devout exclamations with the same everlasting lungs of leather. He made the children whom he met in the streets repeat the same words after him; and moreover, assembled them sometimes together, to teach them to sing hymns and songs of devotion, and to instruct them in their Catechism. He repaired to the goals and preached to the prisoners, comforting some and relieving others, begging victuals and other provisions for them, and frequently walking with a heavy basket upon his back. O, detestable villain! thou wantedst nothing but to set up for a hypocrite, to be the most profligate accomplish'd rascal in the Universe. These actions of virtue, in a fellow that was the least virtuous of mankind, procur'd him in a little time the reputation of a saint. Helen and Mendez likewise did all that in them lay to deserve canonization. The one called herself the mother, the other the sister of the thrice blessed Friar Martin. They went every day to the hospitals, where they assisted the sick, made their beds, washed their linen, and did all this at their own expense. By these means the most vicious people in Spain obtained the universal admiration of all Seville. About this time, a gentleman of Madrid happened to come thither about some private affairs; he had formerly been one of Helen's lovers, for women of this character have commonly more than one string to their bow. He knew Mendez to be a notorious cheat, and Montufar to be no better. One day as they came out of church, encompassed by a great number of persons, who kissed their very garments, and conjur'd them to remember them in their prayers, they were known by the aforesaid gentleman; who, burning with a Christian zeal, and not able to suffer three such notorious impostors to abuse the credulity of the whole city, broke through the crowd, and giving a hearty box on the ear to Montufar, 'You wicked cheat,' cried he, 'do you neither fear God nor man?' He would have said more, but his good intention, which in truth was somewhat of the rashest, had not the success it deserved; all the people fell on him whom they believed to have committed sacrilege, in offering this violence to their saint. He was beaten to the ground, and had certainly been torn to pieces by the mob, had not Montufar, by a wonderful presence of mind, undertaken his protection by covering him with his body, keeping off those that were most enraged with him, and exposing himself to their blows. 'My brethren,' cried he to them as loud as he could bawl, 'let the poor wretch alone, for the love of God; be quiet, for the love of the blessed Virgin.' These few words having appeased this horrible tempest, the people made room for brother Martin to pass, who went up to the unfortunate gentleman, well pleased in his heart to see him so used, though showing outwardly a mighty concern for him. He raised him up from the ground, embraced and kissed him, all covered as he was with blood and dirt, and reprimanded the people for their rude behaviour. 'I am a wicked man,' said he to the standers-by. 'I am a sinner; I am one that never did anything pleasing in the eyes of

God. Do you believe,' continued he, 'because you see me dressed in this religious garb, that I have not been a robber all my life-time, the scandal of others, and the destruction of myself? Alas! you are mistaken, my brethren, make me the mark of your contumelies, pelt me with stones, nay, draw your swords upon me.' Having spoken these words with a counterfeit sorrow, he threw himself, with a zeal yet more counterfeit, at the feet of his enemy, and kissed them, not only begged his pardon, but likewise gathered up his sword, cloak, and hat, which he had lost in the scuffle. He helped him on with them again, and leading him by the hand to the end of the street, took his leave of him, after he had bestowed abundance of embraces and as many benedictions on him. The poor man was, as it were, out of his wits at what he had seen, and with what had been done to him, and was so full of confusion that he durst hardly show his head all the while his affairs detained him at Seville. Montufar had won the hearts of all the city by this pretended act of devotion; the people gaz'd at him with admiration, and the children cried after him, 'a Saint, a Saint,' as they cried out, 'a Fox, a Fox,' when they saw his enemy in the street. From this moment, he lived the happiest life in the world. Some nobleman, cavalier, magistrate, or prelate perpetually invited him to dinner, and strove who should have the most of his company. If he were asked his name, he would answer, 'He was a beast of burthen, a sink of filth, vessel of iniquity,' and such like noble attributes which his counterfeit devotion dictated to him. When he visited any of the ladies, he complained to them incessantly of the nothingness of his dispensation, and the deadness of the inward man, adding, he wanted concentration of heart and recollection of spirit. In short, he always talked to them in this magnificent cant and holy gibberish. No alms were given in Seville but what passed through his hands, or those of Helen and Mendez, who were not wanting likewise to act their parts to admiration, and stood as fair for a red-letter preferment in the almanack (I mean to be sainted) as Montufar himself. A lady of quality, who was a widow, and devout even to superstition, sent them every day two dishes of meat for dinner, and as many for supper; and you must know, these dishes were dressed by the very best cooks in Seville. Their house was too little to receive the numerous presents which were daily sent to them. A woman that had a mind to be with child put her petition into their hands, to the end, by their mediation, it might be presented to the tribunal of heaven. Another that had a son in the Indies did the same; as likewise a third that had a brother, prisoner in Algiers. Nay, the poor widow who had to contest with a powerful adversary before an ignorant or covetous judge, did not doubt the success of her cause, when she had once made a present to them according to her ability. Some gave them sweatmeats and conserves, others pictures and ornaments for their closets. Several charitable persons trusted them with great quantities of linen and woollen cloth to dispose among the needy that were ashamed to beg, and with considerable sums of money to distribute as they saw convenient. No one came to visit them empty-handed, and their future canonization was as firmly believed as an article of faith. At last the credulity of the people ran so high, that they came to consult them about their doubtful affairs and things to come. Helen, who was as subtle as a devil, managed all the answers, delivering her oracles in few words, and those capable of receiving different interpretations. Their beds were mean and homely; but at night, with all the fine furniture a man could desire, that loves to sleep deliciously, their house being plentifully furnished with good feather beds, fine coverlids, and, in short, with all sorts of moveables that contribute to the convenience and pleasure of life; and all this they pretended was to be given to some poor widow, whose goods had been seized in execution, or to furnish some young

woman's house who had married without any fortune. Their doors were shut up in winter at five, and in summer at seven o'clock, as punctually as in a well-regulated convent: and then Jack was wound up, the spits turned merrily round, the capons put down to the fire, the table handsomely spread, when our hypocritical triumvirate eat heartily, and drank plentifully to their own and the healths of those people they had cheated. Montufar and Helen lay together for fear of spirits, and their footman and maid, that were of the same complexion, copied so pious an example. As for the good Mendez, she always lay alone, being more taken up with contemplation than with action ever since she had addicted herself to the black art. This was their constant practice, instead of employing their time in mental prayer or in doing penance. 'Tis no wonder if, living so jolly a life, they looked plump and fat; all the city blessed heaven for it, and were mightily surprised that persons of so much austerity and self-denial should look better than those that lived in luxury and ease. For the space of three years they deceived the eyes of all the inhabitants of Seville, and by receiving presents from everyone, and appropriating to their own use the alms that passed through their hands, they heaped together an incredible number of pistoles. All good success was ascribed to the efficacy of their prayers; they stood godfathers to all children, made matches for all the city, and were the common arbitrators of differences. At last, heaven was weary of conniving any longer at their impious lives. Montufar, who was cholerick in his temper, used frequently to beat his valet, who could not bear it, and had quitted his service a hundred times, if Helen, who was more discreet than her gallant, had not prevented it by appeasing him with fair words and presents. One day, having drubbed him immoderately for little or no reason, the boy got to the door, and blinded by his passion, ran directly to the magistrates to inform against these three hypocrites, whom the world took for saints. Helen's diabolical spirit foretold what would happen, therefore advised Montufar to run off with all the gold they had in the house and retire to some place of security till this tempest, which threatened them, had spent itself. It was no sooner said than put into execution; they carried off the most valuable things, and walking down the street as unconcerned as if they had dreaded nothing, went out at one gate." [1]

Twenty years after *Tartuffe* had been played, La Bruyère added, in the sixth edition of the *Caractères*, the portrait of Onuphre the hypocrite. We give it here below:—

"Onuphre has no other bed but a cover of grey serge, but he sleeps upon cotton and down; he is also dressed simply but comfortably. I mean that he wears some very light clothing in summer, and some very soft and woolly in winter; he wears very fine shirts, which he takes very good care to hide. He does not say my hairshirt and my scourge; on the contrary, he would pass then for what he is, a hypocrite, and he wishes to pass for what he is not, for a devout man. It is true that he acts in such a manner that people believe, without his saying so, that he wears a hairshirt, and that he flagellates himself. There are some books lying, all over his room, accidentally. Open them, they are *The Spiritual Combat, The Inward Christian, The Holy Year;* other books are under lock and key. If he walks through the town, and if he sees from afar a man before whom it is necessary that he should pretend to

[1] Translated by Mr Thomas Brown, Mr Savage, and others. London, 1727.

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be religious, downcast eyes, a slow and modest gait, a collected air, are familiar to him; he plays his part. If he enters a church, he observes, to begin with, by whom he can be seen, and, according to what he has discovered, he kneels down and prays, or he neither thinks of kneeling down or of praying. If a good man, and one in authority, draws near to him, who can see and hear him, he not only prays, but is lost in meditation; he has upheavings of the spirit, he sighs aloud; but if the good man goes away, the latter, who sees him depart, gets calmed down, and no longer utters a sound. Another time he enters a church, makes his way through the crowd, chooses a place where he can collect his thoughts, where every one can see how he humbles himself. If he hears courtiers talking or laughing, or who are less silent in church than in an ante-chamber, he makes more noise than they to get them to be silent; he begins again his meditation, which is always a comparison between those persons and himself, and by which he does not lose. He avoids an empty and solitary church, where he might hear two masses, one after another, and a sermon, attend vespers and compline,—all this between God and himself, and without anybody thanking him for it. He loves the parish church; he frequents churches where there are a great many people; people are sure not to come there for nothing: people are seen there. He chooses two or three days in the year, when, without any necessity whatever, he fasts or mortifies himself; but at the end of the winter, he coughs; there is something wrong in the chest; he is bilious; he has had an attack of ague; people entreat, urge him, and even quarrel with him, so that he should not keep his fasts, when he has begun them, and he gives way out of complaisance. If Onuphre is named an umpire in a quarrel between relatives, or in a lawsuit amongst a family, he is on the side of the strongest, I mean the richest; and he cannot persuade himself that a man who has much wealth can be in the wrong. If he is on a good footing with a rich man, who is ignorant of his real character, whose parasite he is, and who may assist him very much, he does not cajole that rich man's wife; he makes her no advances, nor a declaration of his love; he will run away, he will leave his cloak behind him, if he is not as sure of her as he is of himself; he has not the least idea of employing devotional phrases to seduce her; he does not employ them usually; but on set purpose, and when they can be useful to him, and never when they would only serve to make him very ridiculous. He knows where to find more sociable and more docile females than the wife of his friend; he does not abandon them for long, even if it should only be to have it said that he has withdrawn from the world for some time. And who could have any doubts about it, when they see him make again his appearance with an emaciated countenance, and like a man who has mortified himself. Moreover, the women who flourish and prosper as devotees suit him, only with this small difference, that he neglects those who have grown old, and that he looks after the young ones, and amongst those the most beautiful

and the best shaped; that is his attraction; they go away and he goes away; they return and he returns; they remain and he remains; he has the consolation of seeing them in every place and at every hour. Who would not be edified by that? They are pious and he is pious. He does not forget to take advantage of the blindness of his friend, and of the way he is prepossessed in his favour: now he borrows money from him; again he acts in such a manner that this friend offers it to him; his friends fall foul of him because he has no recourse to them when he is in want. Sometimes he will not receive a farthing without giving his note of hand for it, which he is quite sure never to take up. Another time he states, and with a certain intonation, that he wants nothing, and that he does when he only wants a small sum; at some other time he praises publicly the generosity of a certain man, in order to work upon his friend's honour, and to induce him to put down a very large sum; he does not think of accaparating the whole of his succession, nor of obtaining a general donation of all his property, above all if the question is to take them away from a son, the lawful heir. A devout man is neither a miser, nor violent, nor unjust, nor even interested. Onuphre is not devout, but he wishes to be thought so, and through a perfect, though false imitation of piety, advances his interests in an underhand manner. He therefore does not come into collision with direct heirs; he never insinuates himself in a family where there is a daughter to be provided for, and a son to be established; their rights are too powerful and too inviolable; they cannot be infringed without public scandal, and that he fears; without such an undertaking coming to the ears of the prince, from whom he hides all his dealings, for fear of being discovered, and of appearing in his true character. He plots against collateral heirs, who can be attacked with more impunity; he is the terror of male and female cousins, of the nephew and the niece; the flatterer and the firm friend of every uncle who has made a fortune. He pretends to be the legitimate heir of every old man who dies rich and without children; and the latter must disinherit him if he wishes his relatives to receive what he leaves behind. If Onuphre does not find an opportunity to deprive them wholly of it, he takes at least a good part of it; a little slander, less than that, a trifling slighting remark, suffices for that pious design, and such a talent he possesses in the highest degree of perfection; he often considers it his obligation not to let it lie by uselessly; according to him it is our duty to attack certain people; and these are the people whom he does not like, whom he wishes to harm, and whose spoils he longs for. He obtains what he wishes without even taking the trouble of opening his mouth; they speak to him of Eudoxe, he smiles or sighs; they ask some more questions, they insist that he should answer, he replies nothing; and he is right, he has said enough."

We can now compare La Bruyère's careful delineation of the hypocrite with Molière's masterly, life-like creation of him. There is no

doubt, in my mind, that La Bruyère wished to correct his master; the mention he makes of "a hairshirt and a scourge, of a daughter to be provided for, and a son to be established," sufficiently prove this. But I do not think he has succeeded. La Bruyère has given an almost photographic sketch of the canting hypocrite such as he appeared in 1690; he has described to us his dress, his manners, his slang, and even the religious books then in vogue: but we feel all the time that Onuphre only pretends to be religious, because it was then the fashion to be so, because the king gave the tone to the courtiers to be pious. In the following reign, Onuphre would have been most probably a *roué*, and exchanged his cloak of hypocrisy for a velvet jacket, adorned with gold lace; he would have forsaken the handsome pious young devotees to go and make his appearance at the suppers of the Regent. Onuphre is not a man: he is only an automaton, set in motion by every blast of court favour or disfavour; he is a model of a time-serving courtier. That La Bruyère may have thought so himself is not impossible, for Onuphre's portrait is to be found in the chapter on *Fashion* amongst the delineations of the amateur of flowers, the collector of engravings, the lover of birds; and immediately preceding it, is a sketch of a courtier. If the real hypocrite had been limned, his portrait would have found a place in the chapter *On Man*, or in that *On Judgments*.

But Molière gives us the hypocrite by nature, the man who would be a canting scoundrel, even if it did not pay; who cannot help being so; who is a human being, and therefore not perfect; who is a man, and thus sensually inclined; who employs certain means to subdue his passions, and to become a "whited sepulchre," but who gives all the more way to them when he imagines that he can do so with impunity. Even from a dramatic point of view, La Bruyère's portrait of a man whom nothing can move, who is always prudent and circumspect, is only possessed by one idea, has but a single object which he pursues, and who covers his vices with such an impenetrable veil, and is for ever so much on his guard that he can never be caught in a snare; would not make a character fit for the stage, and would disgust an audience. Besides, how could the arrant hypocrite be punished unless he fell in love, and that with the wife of his benefactor, for otherwise Orgon might perhaps have pitied him still, and exclaimed "the poor man!"

Molière's Tartuffe is the hypocrite of all ages and for all times, who does not depend on the meretricious allurements of the court to become one, but who would be one, I am afraid, even in England, and at the present day. Pecksniff seems to me to be a relative of Tartuffe, although his cant is more about humanity, and less about religion. But I imagine Tartuffe to have been a man of a rather florid complexion, with "red ears and ruddy lips," inclined to be stout, with expressive eyes, and very beautiful, white, plump hands, of which he takes great care, and which he is very fond of shewing. He is always well dressed in clothes of sombre hue; his linen is scrupulously white; his manners are gentle-

manlike and insinuating; he is ever polite, but can be firm, and shows sometimes that he can be so; he is slow and impressive of speech, with an unctuous or rather oily flavour; he persuades now and then some hysterical females of defective education, but oftener terrifies the old and feeble-minded; he is a middle-aged man, of rather goodly shape, and capable of inspiring one of those semi-mystic, semi-sensual passions, of whose baneful existence evidence crops up at certain periods amongst so-called civilised nations. He certainly never can have been the low-bred, sniffling, caddish-looking, soddened, pasty-faced beadle, which is generally represented as his prototype on the stage. If Tartuffe had been such a man, he would not have obtained a footing at Orgon's house; and might have entertained the idea of courting a kitchen-wench or a scullery-maid, but would never have dared to attempt to seduce the virtuous and lady-like Elmire.

It has been stated that Molière, in delineating Tartuffe, intended to depict the Abbé de Rouquette, who became afterwards Bishop of Autun. This town appears to have been unfortunate in its episcopal guides; for Talleyrand, was also for some time bishop of that place. But the identity of the Abbé de Rouquette with Tartuffe is more than doubtful, and rests on a tradition that M. de Guilleragues, who lived in the hotel of the Prince de Conti with the Abbé, must have communicated to Molière some of the latter's hypocritical tricks. According to others, Tartuffe's adventure with Elmire happened to the Abbé at the duchess de Longueville's house. The duchess de Longueville, a sister of the great Condé, had, at the time *Tartuffe* was first represented, only just become a widow, and was already forty-five years old, whilst the Abbé was four years younger. Although, therefore, it may have happened at the duchess's house, it is very unlikely to have occurred with that lady herself. The whole story appears doubtful; for at the death of the duchess, her relatives chose de Rouquette who, in the meantime had become Bishop of Autun, to preach her funeral sermon. This choice would not have been made if he had disgraced himself in any way at the noble lady's house. The Abbé preached so well, that Madame de Sévigné, who was present, wrote to her daughter: "He was not Tartuffe, he was not a pantaloon, but an eminent prelate." At another time, she wrote to the same: "We were obliged to go and dine with M. d'Autun. The poor man!" This only proves to my mind that Madame de Sévigné thought that the Abbé was like Tartuffe, but is no proof that Molière, in writing this comedy, intended to hit the rather worldly-minded Abbé, who is said to have been a great intriguant, and to have preached sermons which he did not write, if we may believe the following epigram, which circulated at that time:—

Sermons penned by other men,
Roquette preaches, people state;
I, who know where they are bought,
Say they are his, at any rate.

Another tradition, which rests upon even fewer grounds, mentions that Louis XIV., one evening during the campaign of 1662, just at the point of going to dine, advised Péréfixe, Bishop of Rhodez, who had been the king's teacher, to do likewise. As it was a fast-day, the bishop said he was only going to take a slight meal. When he had retired, the king saw one of the bystanders smiling; and upon his asking him the reason of this, the latter replied that His Majesty need not be uneasy about M. de Rhodez, and then told what he had seen the bishop eat for his dinner. At the mention of each dish, it is said that the king exclaimed each time, "The poor man!" and that Molière was present at this scene, and afterwards reminded Louis XIV. of it.

I can only say that all these traditions seem to me very unlikely. One thing is certain, that the noun Tartuffe is connected with the old French *truffe*, *truffle*, a truffle, and also a jest, a fib. In cognate languages, in the Italian *comedia dell' arte*, we find *Truffa* and *Truffaldino*, as rascally servants; in the Venetian, *Tofolo* and *Tiritofolo*, a stout but small knavish servant; in the Milanese dialect, we have *Tartuffol*, a dotard as well as a truffle; and in the Neapolitan tongue, *Taratufolo*, a simpleton.[2] All these seem to be connected with the low Latin word *truffactor*, deceiver, with the augmentative *tra:* hence *tratuffar*, euphonically *tartuffar*. Perhaps Molière may have thought of some imaginary connection between the supposed erotic powers of the truffle, and the amativeness of the hypocritical title-role of his play; but, in any case, he could have found the name *tartuffo* in *Il Malmantile racquistato*, a facetious Italian poem by Lorenzo Lippi, which circulated in manuscript in France, long before *Tartuffe* was performed. The author of the *Observations sur une comédie de Molière* (see Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*, Vol. III., page 94), which appeared after *Tartuffe's* first three acts had been represented on the sixth day of the *Pleasures of the Enchanted Island*, always calls the hero of the piece Tartouffle. Montufar, the chief character in Scarron's tale, *The Hypocrites*, probably from the Spanish *tufo*, vapour, may also have partly led Molière to use the name of his hero. In an old French translation of Platina's *De Honesta Voluptate*, published in 1505, *truffe* and *tartuffe* are used as synonymous words for hypocrites; and Molière, in his first petition to the King, speaks of the *tartuffes*, meaning the impostors,—not using the word as a personal, but as a generic name.

We have already said that the first three acts of *Tartuffe* were first performed at Versailles, on the 12th of May 1664, and that the king forbade it to be given to the public; for, in the official *Gazette* of the 17th of the same month, we find:—"This great monarch is careful to cut off

[2] It is odd that *fungus*, in Latin, a mushroom, also means "a dolt;" so the Italian, *zucca*, a pumpkin, is employed in the same way. The French, *un melon*, *un concombre*, *un cornichon*, a girkin, and *une citrouille*, a pumpkin, all vegetables which are watery and faint in taste, are often used to characterise a person of weak intellect.

all the seeds of division in the Church, and none of his predecessors bore ever more gloriously the title of its Eldest Son, which he keeps up by that delicacy which he shows for everything which regards it, as he has shown it lately by his prohibiting the performance of a comedy, called *The Hypocrite*, which His Majesty, piously enlightened in everything, judged absolutely injurious to religion, and capable of producing very dangerous effects."

The King was staying at Fontainebleau from the 16th of May until the 13th August of the same year (1664), and it was during that time that the Vicar of St Barthélemy, Pierre Roulès (see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I., p. xxx.) presented to the King his pamphlet: *Le Roi glorieux au monde, ou Louis XIV. le plus glorieux de tous les rois du monde.* In this pamphlet, which is full of flattery—I had nearly said idolatry—of Louis XIV., Molière is attacked. I shall give first, as a curiosity, a passage in which the King is sufficiently bespattered with praise: "There are certainly, on the whole earth we live on, sufficient kings, but few who are, and who can be qualified, and really be called glorious kings. But amongst all, and even if they should be numberless, Louis XIV., who reigns in France, has the happiness and glory of belonging to them. And to know that he is in that position, and to be convinced of honouring him with respect in this supreme and royal quality and dignity, what else is necessary but to behold his grandeur and glory, the lustre and the brilliant splendour of his virtues, the lofty elevation of his power, and his very great merits, and the esteem in which they are held, or otherwise to measure him by his countenance; but I make a mistake, by the highest perfection amongst all the other kings of the whole world. I am not ignorant that comparisons are odious, that it is not a title to consideration, nor a very glorious advantage to be grand and eminent, only because others are disparaged and valued less highly. I desire, therefore, not to raise the lofty and eminent glory of Louis XIV., by despising and lowering every one, but by this characteristic that he has the honour of being the master and the sovereign of all things, which, without being idolators, we worship and reverence publicly in his royal Majesty, because he is a terrestrial god and a divine man, without example and without equal, having nothing to struggle against or to dispute with except himself."

I think this laudation is sufficiently nauseous. Let us see now what this pious vicar has to say for Molière:—"A man, or rather a demon incarnate and dressed like a man, the greatest unbeliever and free-thinker that ever existed even in past ages, possessed sufficient impiety and abomination to draw out of his diabolical mind a play quite ready to become public, in having it represented upon a stage, to make a mockery of the whole Church, to contemn the most sacred character and the most divine function and that which is most holy in the Church. . . . He deserved for this sacrilegious and impious attempt a final, exemplary and public punishment, and even the stake, a fore-runner of the fires of hell, to expiate so

heinous a crime of high-treason against Heaven, which aims at destroying the Catholic religion, in criticising and jeering at its most religious and holy practices. . . . But His Majesty, after having given him a severe reprimand, and animated by a just wrath, has, by a trait of his usual clemency, in which he imitates the essential gentleness of God, condescendingly forgiven him his insolence and his demoniacal boldness, in order to give him time to repent of it publicly and solemnly all his life. And to stop successfully the exposition and the sale of his impious and irreligious production, and of his licentious and free-thinking poetry, he has commanded him, under pain of death, to suppress and tear up, to hush up and burn all that was written of it."

Although this language was pretty strong, it did not prevent the troupe of Molière from being invited to come to Fontainebleau, to contribute to the amusements presented to Monsignore Chigi, the Pope's Nuncio. They remained there from the 21st of July to the 13th of August, and it appears that, during that time, Molière read to the Nuncio *Tartuffe*, and that the Nuncio did not disapprove of it. He then presented to Louis XIV. the following petition :—

Sire,[3]—The aim of comedy being to correct men by amusing them, I thought that, in the situation which I occupy,[4] I could not do better than attack by pictures full of ridicule the vices of my age; and hypocrisy being no doubt not only one of the most usual among them, but also one of the most annoying as well as most dangerous, I had the idea, Sire, that I would be rendering not a small service to the honest people of your kingdom, if I wrote a comedy that should decry the hypocrites, expose plainly the studied grimaces of those ultra-godly people, all the covert scoundrelism of these false coiners of devotion, who try to inveigle people with their counterfeit zeal, and their sophistic charity.

I have constructed this comedy, Sire, with all the care, and, as I believe, with all the circumspection demanded by the delicacy of the material; and the better to preserve the esteem and respect due to the truly pious, I have distinguished as much as I could the character which I had to sketch. I have left no room for equivocal interpretation, I have left out everything that could confound the good with the bad, and have employed in this picture only those express colours and essential traits which would serve to reveal, at the first glance, the veritable and downright hypocrite. Nevertheless, all my precautions have been useless. People have taken advantage, Sire, of the delicacy of your feelings on the subject of religion, and have succeeded in probing you in your only vulnerable spot, I mean your respect for sacred things. The Tartuffes on the sly, have been artful enough to find grace in your Majesty's sight; in short, the originals have caused the copy to be suppressed, no matter how innocent and startlingly like it may have been.

Great as was the blow caused by the suppression of this work, my misfortune has been mitigated by the manner in which your Majesty explained yourself on this subject;[5] and I have seen, Sire, that all cause of complaint was taken

[3] This petition is a reply to the pamphlet *Le Roi glorieux au monde*, and is often quoted by de Rochemont in his *Observations* (see Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*, Vol. III., p. 94).

[4] This situation was that of manager of the troupe of the theatre of the Palais Royal.

[5] See Introductory Notice to the *Princess of Elis*, Vol. III., p. 31.

away from me, when you declared kindly that you found nothing objectionable in this comedy, which you nevertheless forbade me to produce in public.

But notwithstanding this glorious declaration of the greatest and most enlightened monarch in the universe, even notwithstanding the approbation of Monsignor the Nuncio, and the majority of our prelates, who, when I privately read my work to them, have all fully concurred in the sentiments of your Majesty,—notwithstanding all this, I say, a book has been published which openly contradicts all those august testimonies.[6] Your Majesty may say what he pleases, the Nuncio and the prelates may proclaim their judgment as much as they like, my comedy, without having even been seen, is diabolical, and as diabolical is my brain; I am a demon incarnate, and dressed like a man, an unbeliever, an impious wretch, deserving of exemplary punishment. It is not enough that the flames expiate my offence in public, I should be quit of it at too cheap a rate; the charitable zeal of this gallant and good man hardly cares to stop there; he requires that I shall find no mercy at the hands of God, he insists absolutely that I must be damned; that is a settled affair.

This book, Sire, has been presented to your Majesty, and you can yourself doubtless judge how annoying it is to me to see myself daily exposed to the insults of these gentlemen; the harm these slanders do me in the eyes of the world, whether they are to be meekly borne, and the interest I have to rid myself of its imposture, and to show the public that my comedy is nothing less than what it is said to be. I shall not say anything, Sire, about the claims due to my reputation, or to the justification of the innocence of my work in the eyes of the world; enlightened Kings, like you, have no need to have people's wishes pointed out to them; they perceive, like God, our wants, and know better than we do, what they ought to grant us.[7] It is sufficient for me to place my interests in your Majesty's hands, and to await respectfully from him whatever he may be pleased to ordain on the subject.

Although the King did not yet allow *Tartuffe* to be performed in public, the first three acts were played, by order of Monsieur, the only brother of the King, on the 25th of September 1664, at Villers-Cotterets, before the King and the whole court; and the complete comedy, in five acts, was played at Raincy, the seat of the Princess Palatine, and by order of the Prince de Condé, on the 29th of November 1664, and on the 8th of November of the following year. During all this time Molière's influence at court had been strengthened; the *Misanthrope* had been successfully played; he had contributed during the winter, 1666-1667, several comedies to the *Ballet des Muses*, and when, in the summer of the latter year, the King set out for his campaign in Flanders, Molière, reckoning upon a verbal authorisation of Louis, brought out *Tartuffe* at the Palais-Royal, on the 5th of August 1667, under the name of *The Impostor*. Tartuffe became a layman, and was called Panulphe; he wore a little hat, long hair, a large collar, a sword, and lace all over his coat; whilst some passages were altogether suppressed or toned down. But the next day the play was forbidden by order of the first President of the Parliament of Paris, M. de Lamoignon. On the 8th of the same month,

[6] This refers to *Le Roi glorieux au monde*, and Molière quotes all the phrases from that pamphlet.

[7] Molière imitates here the language of his accuser de Roules.

two actors of Molière's troupe, La Grange and La Thorillière, started off in a post-chaise, in order to go and present to the King, who was at that time before Lille, the following petition :—

SIRE,—It is a very bold step on my part to come and trouble a great monarch in the midst of his glorious conquests; but in the position in which I am, Sire, where am I to find protection except in the place where I have come to seek for it? And what am I to invoke against the authority of the power that overwhelms me, unless it be the source of that power and authority, the just dispenser of the absolute commands, the sovereign judge, and the master of all things.

Until now, Sire, my comedy has not met with your Majesty's favour. In vain have I produced it under the title of *The Impostor*, and disguised the personage beneath the garb of a man of the world;[8] vainly have I given him a small hat, long hair, a great collar, a sword, and lace over the whole of his dress; in vain have I modified it in several places, and carefully cut out everything that I deemed could furnish the shadow of a pretext to the celebrated originals of the portrait I wanted to paint; all has been of no use. The cabal has re-awoke at the simple conjectures which they may have had about the matter. They have found means to surprise minds, who, on any other subject, profess never to allow themselves to be surprised.[9] No sooner did my comedy appear than it has found itself struck down by the blow of a power which is entitled to respect; and all I have been able to do in this struggle, in order to save myself from the burst of this tempest, was to say that your Majesty had had the kindness to allow me the representation, and that I did not think there was any need to ask this permission from others, seeing that it was your decree only which had prohibited it.

I doubt not, Sire, that the people whom I depict in my comedy will employ many artifices with your Majesty, and will try to enlist among their party many truly pious, who are the more susceptible of being deceived, because they judge others by themselves. They have the knack of investing their intentions with most beautiful colours. Whatever face they may put upon them, it is not really God's interest that causes them to move in this; they have shown this sufficiently well in the comedies which they have allowed so often to be played in public without saying a word about them. Those only attacked piety and religion, for which they care very little; but this one attacks and shows them up personally, and that is what they cannot tolerate.[10] They cannot forgive me for having unmasked their impostures to the eyes of the whole world; and, doubtlessly, they will not fail to tell your Majesty that everybody has been scandalised at my comedy. But the real truth, Sire, is that all Paris has only been scandalised at the prohibition of it; that the most scrupulous have found the representation of it most salutary; and that people have been astonished that persons of such well known probity should show such great deference for those whom the whole world ought to hold in horror, and should be so opposed to that true piety which they profess.

I await respectfully the verdict which your Majesty will deign to pronounce upon this subject; but certain is it, Sire, that I must no longer think of writing

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[8] This pre-supposes that Molière intended to make originally a clergyman of Tartuffe.

[9] Molière speaks here of the first President of the Parliament of Paris, M. de Lamoignon, who had forbidden *Tartuffe* to be played.

[10] This phrase is nearly word for word what the Prince de Condé replied to Louis XIV. with regard to *Scaramouch, a hermit*. In the preface to *Tartuffe*, which was printed two years after this petition had been presented, Molière names the Prince (see page 130).

comedies, if the Tartuffes should gain the day, because they will, through this, assume the right to persecute me more than ever, and find something to cavil at in the most innocent things that will fall from my pen.

May your kindness, Sire, vouchsafe to protect me against their venomous hatred! and permit me to hope that at your return from so glorious a campaign, I may be able to divert your Majesty after the fatigues of your conquests, to provide you with some innocent pleasures after such noble works, and to make the monarch smile who causes all Europe to tremble.[11]

On the 11th of August of the same year (1667) there appeared an order of Hardouin, Archbishop of Paris, addressed to all the vicars and curates of Paris and the suburbs, "forbidding all persons of our diocese to represent, read, or hear read the above mentioned comedy (*Tartuffe*), either publicly or privately, under any name or pretext whatever, and that under pain of excommunication." On the 20th of the same month, there was published a *Lettre sur la comédie de l' Imposteur*, which has sometimes been attributed to Molière himself, but which bears no marks of his style or of his clearness of expression. It is possible, however, that one of his friends may have written it, and brought forward some of the author's arguments, but not in Molière's words. This letter, which is rather prolix, begins with a careful and interesting analysis of the play, well worth reading, even at the present time, and which shows the alterations which it underwent since its first representation, and ends with two reflections—the first, that some people think that religious subjects should never be mentioned on the stage. The author combats this opinion by stating that "religion is only the perfection of reason, at least as regards morality; that it purifies and elevates it, that it dispels only the darkness which sin has spread in the place where it dwells; in short, that religion is only a more perfect reason." He further argues that though "religion has its places and times fixed for its sacrifices, its ceremonies, and its other mysteries, ... its truths, expressed in words, belong to all times and all places;" that the ancients never scrupled to produce their gods upon the stage, and that in early times Passion-plays were represented. His second reflection is that this comedy has given a fatal blow to what is called "solid gallantry," and that "though preachers thunder against it, confessors reprove it, pastors threaten, well constituted minds lament it, parents,

[11] The following is the mode in which the *Régistres de la Comédie-Francaise* (see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. II., page 287), record the presentation of this petition: "The following day, the 6th, a tipstaff, from the Court of Parliament, came in the name of the first President, M. de Lamoignon, to forbid the piece. The 8th, the Sieur de la Thorillière and I, de la Grange, started by post from Paris to obtain an audience from the King respecting said prohibit. His Majesty was at the siege of Lille in Flanders, where we were very well received. *Monsieur* gave us his protection as usual, and His Majesty sent us word that, at his return to Paris, he would have the comedy of *Tartuffe* examined, and that we should play it. After this, we came back. The journey cost a thousand francs to the company. They did not play during our voyage, and we resumed acting the 25th September.

husbands, and masters incessantly watch over it, and labour continually and strenuously in vain to check the impetuous torrent of impurity which desolates France; it is, however, considered ridiculous amongst fashionable people not to be carried away by it; and that some glory not more in loving incontinency than others in reproving it."

Lille surrendered on the 27th of August. Louis XIV. returned to Saint Germain on the 7th of September; but no permission was given to play *Tartuffe*, and on the 25th of September, 1667, the theatre of the Palais-Royal opened with *The Misanthrope*. (See Vol. I.I., page 261). But during the last months of the year, Molière did not play. I suppose he exemplified the truth of the saying, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." He played again, however, in the beginning of the year 1668, had *Amphitryon* performed on the 13th of January, *George Dandin* and *The Miser* in the same year. At last, after two years' waiting, and after *Tartuffe* had been read repeatedly at the houses of the principal nobility and gentry, and been played anew, on the 20th of September 1668, at Chantilly, the seat of the Prince de Condé, in the presence of Monsieur and his wife, permission was granted to play it; and on the 5th February, 1669, it appeared for the first time before the public. That very day, Molière sent to the King the following petition:—

SIRE,—A most respectable physician,[12] whose patient I have the honour to be, promises me, and will bind himself by a legal act, executed before a notary, to make me live thirty years longer if I can procure him a favour of your Majesty. In answer to his promise, I have told him that I do not want as much, and that I would be satisfied if he would only promise me not to kill me. This favour, Sire, is a canonry in your royal chapel of Vincennes, vacant through the death of . . .

May I still venture to ask this favour of your Majesty, the very day of the great

[12] His name was Mauvillain, according to Grimarest. It was in speaking of Mauvillain that Louis XIV. said one day to Molière: "You have got a physician, what does he do to you?" "Sire," answered Moliere, "we chat together; he prescribes remedies; I do not take them, and I get better." M. Maurice Raynaud, in *les Médecins au temps de Molière*, says: "Mauvillain had numerous friends amongst the Faculty. He showed some talent as professor of botany, and later, assisted Fagon in the *Hortus regius*. The theses defended, whilst he was president, and inspired by him, possess generally a twofold character. They either are in praise of chemistry,—and here we recognise a former pupil of Montpellier, wholly devoted to the prescribing of many drugs, praising the singular virtues of the rhinoceros' horn, of the sapphire, the emerald, the besoar, and above all, of antimony, and making great fun of the antiquated partisans of senna and syrup of pale roses,—or are about some facetious subject, like: *An pallidis virginum coloribus Venus*, giving scope to all kinds of equivocal sayings or broad jokes, told in very good Latin. All this seems to show us a man of very independent character, very jovial, very irritable, naturally inclined to opposition, and, in the quarrels of the school of medicine, acting the part of the leader of a party." Molière obtained the canonry he asked for the son of this physician. Let me draw attention to the free and easy style in which Molière addresses the King.

resurrection of Tartuffe, resuscitated by your kindness? I am, through this first favour, reconciled with the devotees; and through the second, I shall be reconciled with the doctors. For me it is, no doubt, too many favours at one time, but perhaps it is not too many for your Majesty; and I await, with a little respectful expectation, the answer to my petition.

The *Tartuffe* was a great success, and was played nearly forty-four consecutive times at the Palais-Royal, before crowded houses, besides five times at noblemen's seats.

At the end of the year 1669, appeared a little piece, in one act, and in verse, called *La Critique du Tartuffe*, which seems never to have been played, and preceded by a satire, also in verse, in which Pradon, the great enemy of Boileau, appears to have had a hand. In it, it is stated that the great success of Molière's play was owing to its having been forbidden so long. In the *Critique* itself, it is said that "he steals from a thousand authors Spanish nonsense, but the age allows it, and in spite of all my sense; the poor man! . . . I pardon him."

The storms that were now raised against *Tartuffe* originated chiefly with the clergy. Bourdaloue, in his sermon for the seventh Sunday after Easter—preached in 1669—pretends that "as true and false piety have a great number of actions in common, and as the external appearances of both are almost wholly similar, the traits with which false religion are depicted harm the true one." This, he says, happens "when they put upon the stage and expose to public mockery an imaginary, or even, if you like, a real hypocrite, and, by portraying him, turn into ridicule the holiest things, the fear for the judgments of God, the horror against sin, the most praiseworthy and the most Christian practices in themselves."[13]

It may not be amiss to state here that Bossuet, in the *Maximes et Réflexions sur la Comédie*, which were written in answer to the *Lettre d'un Théologien*, translated into French from the Italian of Father Caffaro, a Sicilian Theatine monk, defending the stage, and which *Maximes* were only published in 1694, twenty years after Molière's death, attacks Molière, and says: "We must then consider as honest the impieties and infamies with which the comedies of Molière are filled, and not count amongst the pieces, represented in the present times, those of an author who died, so to speak, before our eyes, and who even now fills the stage with the coarsest equivoques, with which the ears of Christians have ever been poisoned. . . . Only think if you will dare to maintain before Heaven plays in which virtue and piety are always ridiculed, corruption always excused and always made laughable." And speaking of Molière's

[13] Bourdaloue seems not to have remembered the saying of Cléante (Act i., Scene 6) to Orgon—"There are hypocrites in religion as well as pretenders to courage. . . . I know no character more worthy of esteem than the truly devout, nor anything in the world more noble or beautiful than the holy fervour of sincere piety: so I know nothing more odious than the whited sepulchre of a pretended zealot."

death, that same eminent and charitable divine says: "Posterity will know, perhaps, the end of this author and comedian, who, in performing his *Malade Imaginaire*, or his *Médecin par force*, received the last stroke of that illness of which he died a few hours later, and passed from the jokes upon the stage, amongst which he almost breathed his last sigh, before the tribunal of Him who has said, 'Woe unto you that laugh now, ye shall weep.'"

The purpose of Molière's play is most powerfully defended by himself in his preface; and that he is now considered as having been right, is proved by its having taken a permanent place on nearly every European stage; at least the stage of every country where hypocrites are found, men who use religion as a cloak in order to further their own personal or carnal designs.

The skill with which Molière has drawn the hypocrite of his time, a sensualist and a casuist, and the way in which, during two acts, he prepares and leads up to his appearance, are very great. Tartuffe's first scene with Elmire is described in plain, but not indelicate, language, of which the truth is for all ages; it is only surpassed by Tartuffe's second scene with Orgon's wife, in which he begins to show his suspicion, is extremely cautious and guarded, but at last, blinded by passion, falls into the trap laid for him. The blasphemous cant used by the hypocrite when he bares what he calls his soul in order to poison the air with the expression of his foul wishes, and at last says that "the greatest offence of sin lies in scandal and riot, but that it is no sin if you sin by stealth," is, and will be true at all times. The credulity of Orgon is thought by some to be very improbable; but can we go through the world without seeing every day examples of it? If there were no credulous people, how could political, religious, legal, medical, financial, commercial, and, I am sorry to say, literary quacks, thrive now-a-days so wonderfully well! The impetuous Damis, the sensible, clear-headed Cléante, the plain-spoken waiting-maid Dorine, the bigoted, infatuated Madame Pernelle, and the modest Elmire, are all drawn with a masterly hand, and bear the impress of the genius which created them.

It may be interesting to give Napoléon I.'s opinion about *Tartuffe*, and about its performance having been prohibited: "After dinner," says Las-Cases in the *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène*, "the Emperor read *Tartuffe* to us, but he was so tired that he could not finish it; he put down the book, and after having paid a just tribute of praises to Molière, he ended in a manner we did not expect, and said, 'Certainly the whole of *Tartuffe* is masterly; it is one of the best works of an inimitable man; however, this comedy has such a character that I am not at all astonished that its appearance upon the stage has been the subject of repeated negotiations at Versailles, and of much hesitation in the mind of Louis XIV. If I am astonished at anything, it is that the king allowed it to be performed. In my opinion it presents religious feeling under colours so odious; a certain scene is so decidedly and completely indecent, that,

a regards myself, I do not hesitate to say that if that comedy had been written in my time, I would not have permitted it to be brought out.'"

M. Eugène Despois, the learned editor of Molière's plays, now in course of publication in Paris, says in *Le Théâtre français sous Louis XIV.* that only since *Don Juan* and *Tartuffe* had been performed, did the clergy act rigidly against plays and actors, and brought into use laws which had long lain dormant. He also makes in the same book the following remarks about *Tartuffe:* "When we speak of this immortal picture of hypocrisy, we must at least be ourselves sincere, and not pretend to be astonished at the storm of anger raised by this comedy. It might be indeed supposed that only the Tartuffes were irritated, and that whoever said anything against that play showed himself a hypocrite. We do not know precisely what were the intentions of Molière, and if he himself knew them; but could he have any illusion about the import of his play? Nearly all those distinctions which Molière made between true and false devotion, and which are still repeated about this comedy, disappeared; and just as Molière, in attacking much less serious things, the pretended *Précieuses*, might indeed expect that the real *Précieuses* would feel themselves attacked, so this twofold caricature of a sincere religious feeling in Orgon, and a lying religious feeling in Tartuffe, gave rise to comparisons which Molière ought to have foreseen. We must be honest. I ask every sincere believer, whatever his creed may be—religious, philosophical, or political—would he be glad to see an opportunity given to his adversaries of confounding too easily what may be respectable in the convictions of some, comical or odious in those of others? Let us abandon for a moment the opinions which separate us; there is one, at least, which unites us all, at least in theory—patriotism, which has also its Orgons and Tartuffes. What sincere patriot would not see an inconvenience in the pourtraying of the abuses, the absurdities, and even the hypocrisy of patriotism, at least as each one understands it for himself and his party? A sincere man, if he is accustomed to scrutinise his conscience, finds it difficult enough to understand the ideas of others, which he does not share, and expects to meet the same prepossessions, and to hear the name of calculated hypocrisy given to what perhaps is only his weakness or inconsistency. Yes, Bourdaloue and others, just as little suspected of resembling *Tartuffe*, had a right to be scandalised, and to consider that comedy dangerous. These cursory remarks are made only to excuse prepossessions, which were but too natural, and not an intolerance, and above all calumnies, which are never to be excused."

I shall only remark on this, that if the stage is intended "to hold the mirror up to nature," there can be no harm in showing up hypocrites, either social, religious, philosophical, or political. The real honest believer, the true philosopher, or the sincere patriot, are in nowise affected by these caricatures. As regards tolerance for the

opinions of others, which we do not share, this is a question of philosophy, but has nothing to do with comedy, or, if it has, it tends to destroy all comedy, which is nearly always the exposition of a folly, or of a vice made ridiculous; or, as Molière himself says in *The Impromptu of Versailles*,[14] "the business of comedy is to represent, in a general way, all the faults of men, and especially of the men of our day."

Monsieur Paul Albert, in his excellent work, *La Littérature francaise au 17e siècle*, says: "The endings of Molière's plays have often been criticised. As a general rule, he does not seem to care sufficiently about them; they arrive a little at haphazard, and because the play must have some ending or other. Some even are very far-fetched, and quite contrary to all rules of art, as, for example, the intervention of the *exempt* in *Tartuffe*. I do not know how the critics manage to get Molière out of this scrape, but I should like to be allowed to venture upon an explanation. The compulsory ending of every Tragedy is the violent death of one of the personages; the compulsory ending of every Comedy is a marriage: that was traditional, and exists even at the present time. As marriage was considered a happy ending, every comedy was to end well. But this could only happen when the hero, the very centre of the play, and the pivot on which the action turns, was either conquered, or would suddenly change his determination. In reality, he appears from the very first scenes as the most serious, the only obstacle to the union of the youthful lover and the fair object of his love. He is opposed to it because his ruling passion, his egotism, is not satisfied by it. The Citizen who apes the Nobleman, the Miser, the Hypochondriac, the Blue Stocking, the Devotee, repel a son-in-law who would not suit their daughter, because they wish for a son-in-law who would suit themselves, a noble, a rich man, a physician, a pedant, a devotee. How can one conquer this resistance, destroy that tyranny? Let us look at society: How are things going on there? At the present time, a young girl who is persecuted to marry some one whom she does not love, can always say 'nay' at the last moment, and the law protects her as well as it can; as soon as she is twenty years old, she can say 'yes' to whomsoever she likes, and without consulting any one[15]. It was not thus in the seventeenth century; it was necessary to yield or to enter a convent. This was one of the darkest sides of that society, so much lauded. At every stage of it we find despotism. What has the comic poet to do? The rules of

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[14] See *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. II., Scene iii., page 312. See also what Molière says in the same play about the subjects for Comedy, p. 313.

[15] Before the first French Revolution, marriage in France could take place only in church, and the priest could refuse or grant it; now, only the civil marriage is legal. But every child, whose parents are alive, must have their permission even now (1876), before he or she can legally marry; and only when a young man is twenty-three, and a young girl twenty years old, can they compel their parents to give them that permission, by sending to them a legal officer with what is oddly enough called *une sommation respectueuse*.

his art compel him to end his play with a marriage; but the reality which he has before his eyes gives the lie to the theory. Neither Orgon, M. Jourdain, Argan, nor Philaminte yield; the young girls are sacrificed. Is it moreover likely that, in so unequal a struggle, victory should belong to the weaker? The parents have on their side authority, custom, the inflexibility of a foregone conclusion, the violence of an exclusive passion; the poor child has only her tears and entreaties; very eloquent, it is true, and which, for one moment, move the hearts of the cruel parents, but the sacrifice is at last accomplished. Between the theatrical law, which prescribed a happy ending, and the social law, which presented another, Molière was obliged to take the first; but he took it so unwillingly, and so grumpily, if we may say so, that we can indeed perceive that the second ending seemed to him to be the only true one. Here the thinker betrays himself, and the work, outwardly so light and lively, discovers gloomy depths. It seems that Molière cries to us: 'Do not believe in these happy endings; you see that they are unlikely, impossible. No, the officer will not interfere to prevent Orgon from being robbed, or Tartuffe from entering the house into which he has stolen, or, perhaps, even the bed of the daughter of his victim. Tartuffe is stronger than Orgon; Tartuffe will triumph. The fire from heaven will not fall upon Don Juan; the old legend says so, but Don Juan will quietly continue the course of his acts of scoundrelism, only he will put on a mask of religion, and, after having frightened people, he will edify them in order to deceive them better. The hypochondriac will not become a physician; that is a funny excuse which I have imagined to rid myself of a difficulty; he will take Diafoirus as his son-in-law, who will physic him for nothing. The Citizen who apes the Nobleman will not be taken in by the farce of the Mamamouchi: he will give his daughter to a friend of Dorante, to some ruined nobleman, who will ruin him, and laugh at him. Above all, do not believe that Célimène's gallants will leave her, indignant at her coquettish actions: Célimène shall always have plenty of followers; the more treacherous she is, the greater will be the desire to please her; Alceste will come back the first, will throw himself at her feet, and beg her pardon; she will only know solitude when she will be old and wrinkled. Justice is not of this world, sincerity is not of this world; the strong and the wicked devour the good and the meek. Perhaps a poet will be born one day who will dare to show to society, society such as it is, but that day is yet far off! I moralise and make fun as well as I can, about marriage, which is everything; in two hundred years people will moralise still, but will no longer make fun. You shall behold your miseries face to face, and that will kill all joy in you.' Has Molière gone as far as this? I do not know. Who can pretend to set limits to the man who has written *The Misanthrope, Tartuffe, Don Juan?* For the last two hundred years the critics turn these strange works in and out, and in all directions, and have come to no conclusion as yet."

Goethe says, in his *Conversations*, "A piece to be so constructed as to be fit for the theatre, must be symbolical, that is to say, each incident must be significant in itself, and lead to another still more important. The *Tartuffe* of Molière is, in this respect, a great example. Only think what an introduction is the first scene! From the very beginning, everything is highly significant, and leads us to expect something still more important which is to come . . ! that of the *Tartuffe* comes only once into the world . . . . it is the greatest and best thing that exists of the kind."

In another part of his works, the great German author says: "The *Tartuffe* of Molière makes us hate him; he is a criminal who pretends, like a hypocrite, to be pious and moral, in order to ruin completely an honest family; the ending by a police-officer is therefore quite natural, and very well received. Latterly, this piece has been played again, and brought forward, because it served to show the underhand dealings of a certain class of men who threatened to pervert Government. It was not the beauty and genius of the work which were felt and applauded; the play was only a hostile weapon; the different parties were engaged, the one wished to destroy the evils which the other tried to spread. That which appeared striking in the piece, was that the subject is still of the day, and that it will never lose its effect, on account of the art with which it has been treated."

Molière had the *Tartuffe* printed at his own cost, and corrected or wrote it so carefully, that there is hardly any difference between the first and the three following editions of this comedy.

The German dramatist, Karl Gutzkow, wrote in 1844, a comedy in five acts, and in prose, called *Das Urbild des Tartuffe* (*The Exemplar of Tartuffe*), of which he himself admits that he planned it chiefly with a view to the circumstances which then took place in Germany, and to the severe measures which the Government and police took, at that time, to suppress all obnoxious ideas in print. With the exception of a complete neglect of all historical accuracy, this play is very good, and the intrigue depends chiefly on the interdiction to play the *Tartuffe*. The president, La Roquette, is the model of a Tartuffe, and he employs all the means in his power to prevent Molière's play from being performed. Molière, Louis XIV., and the minister of police, Lionne, are also chief characters in the German play, as well as La Chapelle, who, according to Gutzkow, is not the friend, but an envious enemy, of Molière. The King is in love with Armande Béjart, who is engaged to be married to Molière; he refuses his consent to the performance of *Tartuffe*, because he has been informed that the expected profits of the comedy will serve for the buying of the trousseau of Armande. He gives his consent at last, because the actress has promised to wear a blue neckerchief, if she will lend a favourable ear to his wishes, and in the contrary case a yellow one; and *Tartuffe* is the only play which is ready to be acted, in which she can wear a neckerchief. In the

fifth act, which takes place in the ante-chamber of the King's private box in the theatre, Molière wears the dress of La Roquette, and is mistaken for him, whilst the president is mistaken for the actor; Armande refuses to listen to Louis XIV., who consoles himself with the thought of encouraging, in his own peculiar way, the budding talents and charms of her younger sister, Madeleine. *Tartuffe* is a success, and the hypocrite La Roquette ends the play with the following words: "They may drive us away like wolves; we come back like foxes. Revenge yourselves! Revenge yourselves! We shall do the same. (*In a very humble voice*) I shall enter the order of Jesuits."

Goldoni, the Italian dramatist, wrote also a play called *Molière*, of which he gives an outline in his *Autobiography*, where he says—"I was acquainted with Molière, and respected this master of the art as highly as the Piedmontese, and I was seized instantly with a desire to give them a convincing proof of it. I immediately composed a comedy in five acts, and in verse, without masks or change of scene, of which the title and principal subject were Molière himself. The argument was taken from two anecdotes of his private life; the one, his projected marriage with Isabelle, the daughter of Béjart; and the other, the prohibition of his *Tartuffe*. These two historical facts accord so well together, that the unity of action is perfectly observed. The impostors of Paris, alarmed at the comedy of Molière, knew that the author had sent to the camp, where Louis XIV. then was, to obtain permission for its representation, and they were afraid lest the revocation of the prohibition should be obtained.

"I employed in my piece a person of the name of Pirlon, a hypocrite in every sense of the word, who introduces himself into the author's house, discovers to La Béjart Molière's love for her daughter, of which she was yet ignorant, engages her to quit her companion and director; behaves in the same manner to Isabelle, holding up to her the situation of an actress as the road to perdition, and endeavours to seduce La Foret, their waiting-woman, who, more adroit than her mistresses, dupes the duper, inspires him with a love for her, and takes his cloak and hat from him to give to Molière, who appears on the stage with the dress of the impostor. I was bold enough to exhibit in my piece a much more marked hypocrite than that of Molière; but hypocrites had then lost a great deal of their ancient credit in Italy.

"During the interval between the fourth and last act of my comedy, the *Tartuffe* of Molière is acted in the theatre of the Hotel de Bourgogne; all the characters of my piece make their appearance in the fifth act, for the purpose of complimenting Molière; Pirlon, concealed in a closet, where he was expecting La Foret, is forced to come forth in the presence of the spectators, and is assailed with the sarcasms which he so richly deserved; and Molière, to add to his joy and happiness, marries Isabelle, in spite of the mother, who aspired to the conquest of her future son-in-law.

"In this piece are to be found several details of the life of Molière. The character of Valerio is Baron, an actor of Molière's company. Leander is a copy of La Chapelle, a friend of the author, and often mentioned in the account of his life. . . . This work is in verse. . . . As the subject was a French author, who wrote largely in that style, it became necessary to imitate him."

I have read Goldoni's play, and do not think that he has either succeeded in giving a good idea of the character of Molière, or of a hypocrite. Molière, in the Italian play, in a conversation with Valerio (Act iv. scene 8) says, "Philosophy teaches us, and experience proves it to us, that no other love exists here below but self-love." This is certainly not in conformity with Molière's life. Pirlon, the hypocrite, when discovered repents, and begs pardon on his knees; and this also Tartuffe would not have done. Mercier has remodelled and altered the *Molière* of Goldoni for the French stage; where it was represented, but it did not meet with much success.

In the fifth volume of the "Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732," is found a translation of *Tartuffe*, under the name of *The Impostor*, written by Mr Martin Clare, a schoolmaster. He dedicates it to Mr Wyndham, of Clower-Wall, in Gloucestershire, who appears to have had "a very promising eldest son," a pupil of the pedagogue, and who was going to play a part in the translation of Molière's comedy. Unforeseen circumstances prevented this piece being brought out; but Mr Clare—I suppose with an eye to future favours—says that the young gentleman would, he knows, have done "great justice to any one of the parts." Mr Clare might, like Hamlet, exclaim, "O my prophetic soul." The dedication is as follows:—

SIR,

I take leave to offer You the Fruit of a few leisure Hours, spent in translating one of the most celebrated Pieces of the famous *Molière*. It was at first intended to be exhibited as a publick Exercise by my YOUNG GENTLEMEN (in which Your very promising eldest son, whose Tuition You have been pleased to intrust me with, would, I know do great Justice to any one of the Parts) but on Account of the useful Publication of this excellent Comic Writer, I am inclin'd to send it into the World, under Your Patronage and Protection.

The Original has occasionally given great Offence to the Body of Zealots and Hypocrites in *France*, and wherever else their Numbers were considerable; but from its intrinsick Merit, the Truth of the Drawing, and Justness of the Colouring, this particular Piece has never wanted for Patrons, among Persons of the greatest Sense, Virtue, Learning, and Taste, to support it against the violent Opposition it has met with.

What Success the Translation may have I cannot foresee. But as it is thrown under the Guardianship of a Gentleman, who, both in publick and private Life, has always been a profess'd Enemy to Artifice, Disguise, and Fraud, I am encourag'd to hope, that a moderate Version of a Piece, wherein those Vices are finely expos'd, will not be, for Your sake, ill received by the Publick. I am with great Regard, SIR, *Your most Obliged, and Obedient, Humble Servant*,

MARTIN CLARE.

Academy in *Soho Square, London, July* 25, 1732.

There is also a Prologue to Mr Clare's *Impostor*, spoken by a young gentleman of the Academy in Soho Square, when acted there in the year 1726; and an Epilogue spoken by another young gentleman in the character of "Madam Parnelle," which I doubt very much if any schoolmaster would let one of his pupils recite at the present time.

Matthew Medbourne, an actor of considerable eminence, belonging to the Duke of York's theatre in the reign of King Charles II., wrote a translation, in blank verse, of the *Tartuffe*, which he dedicated to the Right Honourable Henry, Lord Howard of Norfolk. The translator, a Roman Catholic, seems to have been accused, by the well known Dr Titus Oates, of complicity in the supposed Catholic plot, for he was imprisoned, and died in Newgate in 1679. His translation, called *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan*—Puritan stands for Huguenot—was acted at the Theatre-Royal, 1670, and, according to the author's account, seems to have met with great success. There are several new scenes added in the English play which are not found in the original comedy, and which certainly do not improve it. They are the following:—At the end of the first act of *The French Puritan*, Laurence, Tartuffe's man-servant, and Dorina, the waiting-maid, meet; he behaves rather rudely to her; but she discovers that he is not a servant, but a confederate of his supposed master, because he addresses the latter only by his name. Tartuffe who, in the original play, does not appear until the second scene of the third act, in this translation, "passes (now) over the stage in a demure posture." In the fifth scene of the second act of the English play, Laurence confesses to Dorina that he is not so holy as he seems; and, in order to prove it, sings a very indecent song. In the eighth scene of the third act, Tartuffe unfolds his plans broadly to Laurence; whilst, in the ninth scene of the same act, Madame Pernelle expresses her delight to "Flypote" that her grandson is disinherited in favour of Tartuffe. In the second scene of the fourth act, Laurence advises Dorina to procure a meeting between Elmire and Tartuffe, and to let Orgon be a secret witness of it. In the original French play, Elmire plans the meeting herself. The fifth act of *The French Puritan* differs also from Molière's comedy; Laurence betrays his master, and produces the cabinet and writings which Tartuffe had appropriated; and then all the characters of the play end with a dance!

Crowne wrote a play, *The English Friar*, acted in 1690, of which the hypocrite, Father Finical, is certainly suggested by Tartuffe. Nobody can read the last scene of the fifth act of the English play without becoming convinced of this. Some of the very words of Tartuffe, Crowne puts into Finical's mouth.

The Nonjuror, a very successful comedy, by Colley Cibber, acted at Drury Lane, Dec. 6th, 1717, is another imitation of *Tartuffe*. In the dedication to the King, Cibber, with an eye to business, says that "the Sullen and Disaffected, ... for want of proper Amusement, often enter into Wild and Seditious Schemes to reform." Of course, the most pro-

per amusement is the Theatre, and to prove this further, he says: "It has even discovered the Strength and Number to be much less than may have been artfully insinuated, ... of which your Majesty may have lately seen an Instance, in the Insuppressible acclamations that were given on your appearing to Honour this Play with your Royal Presence." For this dedication, Cibber received two hundred pounds from George I. Dr Wolff is a close copy from the French original, although the English dramatist says (in his *Apology*) that it was his intention to pourtray "an English popish priest lurking under the doctrine of our own church, to raise his fortune upon the ruin of a worthy gentleman, whom his dissembled sanctity had seduced into the treasonable cause of a Roman Catholic outlaw." The parts of Dorina the waiting-maid, Cléante, and Madame Pernelle are omitted; but that of Marianne (Maria) is improved, and has been made one of the best coquettes on the stage. Cibber has been accused of having stolen the plot, characters, incidents, and most part of the language from Medbourne; but this is untrue. What he has taken from him is the servant Charles (Laurence), who also betrays his master. The prologue of *The Nonjuror*, written by Rowe, is chiefly addressed to the Jacobites, and ends thus:—

> "Ship off, ye Slaves, and seek some passive Land,
> Where Tyrants after your own Hearts command,
> To your Transalpine Master's Rule resort,
> And fill an empty abdicated Court.
> Turn your Possessions here to ready Rhino,
> And buy ye Lands and Lordships at Urbino."

Macaulay in his *History of England*, 8vo, 1855, Vol. III., ch. xiv., "General character of the Nonjuring Clergy," states, "the public voice loudly accused many nonjurors of requiting the hospitality of their benefactors with villany as black as that of the hypocrite depicted in the masterpiece of Moliére. Indeed, when Cibber undertook to adapt that noble comedy to the English stage, he made his Tartuffe a nonjuror; and Johnson, who cannot be supposed to have been prejudiced against the nonjurors, frankly owned that Cibber had done them no wrong."

According to Maidment and Logan's Introductory Notice to *The English Friar*, Cibber owed a great deal of his success to Crowne's play: "For instance, Father Finical becomes a bishop, so does Dr Wolff; both priests are of an amorous complexion; Finical courts the maid, Wolff the mistress, both are detected, and pretty much in the same manner. The *Biographia Dramatica* says, 'The Coquet Maria is truly original, and most elegantly spirited;' is not this precisely the character of Laura, the eldest daughter of Lord Stately, who is described amongst the *Dramatis Personæ* 'a great Gallant and Coquet?' Not to multiply points of resemblance, it is plain that Cibber had some remembrance of *The English Friar* when he was preparing the *Nonjuror* for the stage."

It is said that Pope wrote "a Compleate Key to *The Nonjuror*," under the name of Joseph Guy, in which a comparison is drawn—and not in the choicest language—between Molière's *Tartuffe* and Cibber's *Nonjuror*, greatly—and justly so—to the disadvantage of the latter. Among other compliments, it is said: "Mr Cibber did not want an old woman to strengthen the bigotry of her weak son (Cibber had not plagiarised Madame Pernelle), and therefore has made that son a very old woman."

On June 20th, 1718, Medbourne's translation of *Tartuffe*, which had not been acted for thirty years, was performed at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, with a prologue, said to be written by Pope in imitation of Rowe, and ending almost in his very words, thus:—

> "Ship off, ye Saints, and seek some righteous Land,
> Where Pastors after your own Hearts command;
> Like Criminals adjudg'd to leave the nation,
> Go, take the Benefit of Transportation.
> Turn your possessions here to ready Rhino,
> And Preach abroad by *Jure non Divino*."

Isaac Bickerstaffe altered Colley Cibber's play, and called it *The Hypocrite*, which was acted at Drury Lane on the 17th of November 1768. This is *The Nonjuror*, with the names altered, the bitter attacks against Jacobites and Nonjurors, and a good deal of the spirit left out, Madame Pernelle (old Lady Lambert), from Tartuffe, added, and a new character,—which I venture to think very vulgar—Mawworm, inserted. The hypocrite is called Dr Cantwell, the credulous Orgon, Sir John Lambert, and the coquette, Charlotte.

Sheridan, in *The School for Scandal*, has partly imitated Tartuffe in Joseph Surface, and the third scene of the fourth act of his play seems to me based upon the fifth scene of the fourth act of *Tartuffe*; but as it is only based upon, and not borrowed from, Molière, we do not give it in the Appendix.

Mr John Oxenford, the eminent theatrical critic, has also written a translation of *Tartuffe*, in blank verse, which was performed, with great success, some years ago, at the Adelphi Theatre, London; but as this play has never been printed, I cannot give any extracts from it here.

Whatever has been taken from Molière will be found in the Appendix.

PREFACE.[16]

THIS is a comedy about which there has been a great deal of noise, which has been for a long time persecuted; and the people whom it holds up have well shown that they are the most powerful in France of all those whom I have hitherto portrayed. The marquises, the blue stockings, the cuckolds and the doctors, have quietly suffered themselves to be represented, and have pretended to be amused, in common with all the world, at the sketches which I have made of them; but the hypocrites have not taken the joke. At first they were somewhat amazed, and found it strange that I should have had the presumption to make free with their grimaces, and wish to decry a trade much indulged in by honest people. It is a crime which they could not pardon me, and they have all risen up in arms against my comedy with a terrible fury. They took particular care not to attack it from the point of view where it wounded them—they have too much policy for that, and are too knowing to lay bare the bottoms of their hearts. In accordance with their laudable customs, they have concealed their interest beneath the cloak of God's cause; and to listen to them, *The Tartuffe* is a piece that offends piety. It is, from beginning to end, full of abominations, and nothing is found in it but what deserves the fire. Every syllable in it is impious; the gesticulations themselves are criminal; and the least glance of the eye, the slightest shake of the head, the smallest step to the right or left, conceal mysteries which they find means to explain to my disadvantage.

Of little avail was it to submit it to the criticism of my friends, and to the censorship of the public; the corrections which I have made, the judgment of the King and the Queen, who have seen it; the approbation of the great princes and the great ministers, who honoured the performance with their presence; the testimony of

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[16] This preface was written for the first edition of the *Tartuffe*, in 1669, and is therefore posterior to the petitions given in the Introductory Notice to this play.

people of worth, who found it instructing—all this was of no use. They will not abate one jot; and they still continue, every day, to set their indiscreet zealots on to me in public, who piously load me with insults, and charitably consign me to perdition.

I would care very little for what they could say, were it not for their artfulness in bringing people whom I respect to be at enmity with me, and in enlisting among their ranks the truly good, whose good faith they take advantage of, and who, by the warmth of their interest in the cause of Heaven, are apt to receive the impressions which they wish to give them. It is this which compels me to defend myself. It is with the truly pious that I everywhere wish to justify myself as to the arrangement of my comedy; and I implore them, with all my heart, not to condemn things before they have seen them, to divest themselves of all bias, and not to be the tool of the passions of those whose grimaces are a disgrace to them.

If they will take the trouble to examine my comedy in good faith, they will perceive doubtless, the honesty of my intentions everywhere, and that it is not intended to hold sacred things up to ridicule; that I have treated it with every precaution which the delicacy of the subject required; and that I have employed every possible art and care plainly to show the difference between the character of the hypocrite and that of the truly devout. For this purpose I have devoted two entire acts to prepare my audience for the advent of my scoundrel. He does not make the spectator waver for an instant; he is known immediately by the marks which I have given him; and, from first to last, he does not utter a word, nor make a movement, but what depicts to the beholder the character of a wicked man, in violent contrast to the really good one whom I have placed in opposition to him.

I am well aware that, in reply, those gentlemen have endeavoured to insinuate that the stage is not fit for the discussion of these subjects; but, by their leave, I ask them upon what they base this beautiful maxim. It is a theory which they only advance, and which they do not prove by any means; and it would doubtless, not be difficult to show them that, with the ancients comedy derived its origin from religion, and was a part of their mysteries; that the Spaniards, our neighbours, never celebrate a feast in which comedy is not mixed up; and that, even amongst us it owes its birth to the cares of a brotherhood to which the hôtel de Bourgogne still belongs; that it was a place given to

them to represent in it the most important mysteries of our faith; that comedies printed in Gothic characters, under the name of a doctor of the Sorbonne, may still be seen there; and, without carrying the matter so far, that, in our days, sacred pieces of M. de Corneille[17] have been performed, which were the admiration of the whole of France. If it be the aim of comedy to correct man's vices, then I do not see for what reason there should be a privileged class. Such a one is, in the State, decidedly more dangerous in its consequences than any other; and we have seen that the stage possesses a great virtue as a corrective medium. The most beautiful passages in a serious moral are most frequently less powerful than those of a satire; and nothing admonishes the majority of people better than the pourtrayal of their faults. To expose vices to the ridicule of all the world is a severe blow to them. Reprehensions are easily suffered, but not so ridicule. People do not mind being wicked; but they object to being made ridiculous.

The reproach against me is that I have put pious terms in the mouth of my impostor. How could I avoid it, wishing to represent the character of a hypocrite accurately? It is sufficient, I think, that I show the criminal motives which make him say these things, and that I have eliminated from them the sacred terms, the bad use of which might have caused pain.[18] "But in the fourth act he gives vent to a pernicious moral." But has not this moral been dinned into everybody's ears?[19] Does it say aught that is new in my comedy? And is there any fear that things so universally detested shall leave any impression on men's minds? that I can make them dangerous by introducing them on the stage; that they are likely to receive any authority from the lips of a scoundrel? There is not the least indication of that; and one ought to approve the comedy of *Tartuffe*, or condemn all comedies wholesale.

It is that which people have attacked furiously of late; and never has the stage been so fiercely tilted at. I cannot deny that there have been Fathers of the Church who have condemned

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[17] *Polyeucte*; and *Théodore, virgin and martyr.*

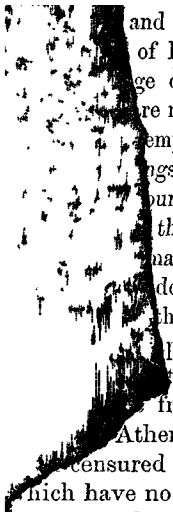
[18] Molière alludes here to a line of *Tartuffe*, in the eighth scene of the third act, which was in the first representation, "Forgive him, O Heaven! as I forgive him." See also note 64, page 175.

[19] Molière speaks of the false casuistical morals attacked by Pascal in the seventh *Provinciale.*

comedy; but neither can it be denied to me that there have been some who have treated it more leniently. Thus the authority upon which people seek to found their censorship is destroyed by this division; and all that can be deduced from this diversity of opinions in equally enlightened minds, is that they have regarded comedy from a different point of view, and that while some have looked at it in its purifying influence, others have considered it in its corrupting tendency, and confounded it with those vile spectacles, rightly named exhibitions of turpitude.

And in fact, since we have to argue upon things, and not upon words; and that the majority of contradictions cannot well be reconciled, and that the same word often envelops two opposite meanings, we have but to lift the veil of the equivocal, and to look what comedy is in itself, to see whether it is to be condemned. It is, doubtless, well known that, being nothing else but an ingenious poem, which, by its agreeable teaching, seeks to point out the faults of mankind, it does not deserve to be so unjustly censured; and if we may listen on that point to the testimony of antiquity, it will tell us that her most famous philosophers have eulogised comedy; they who professed such austere wisdom, and who were incessantly decrying the vices of their age. It will show us that Aristotle devoted many of his vigils to the theatre, and took the trouble to reduce to precept the art of constructing comedies. It will teach us that her greatest men, foremost in dignity, have gloried in composing some themselves; that there were others who did not disdain to recite in public those which they had composed; that Greece proclaimed her appreciation of that art by the glorious prizes she awarded to, and the magnificent theatres she built in honour of it; and lastly, that in Rome this same art was crowned with extraordinary honours. I do not say in debauched Rome, under the licentious emperors, but in disciplined Rome, under the wisdom of her consuls, and at the most vigorous period of Roman virtue.

I admit that there have been times in which comedy became corrupt. And what is there in this world that does not become corrupt every day? There is nothing so pure but what mankind can bring crime to bear upon it; no art so salutary but what they can reverse its intentions; nothing so good in itself but what they can turn to a bad use. Medicine is a profitable art, and every one esteems it as one of the most excellent things in existence; and yet there have been periods in which it has made itself



and has often been used to poison people. Philosophy of Heaven; it was given to us to lead our minds to the ge of God by the contemplation of nature's wonders; re not unaware that it has often been diverted from its employed openly to support impiety. Even the most gs are not safe from men's corruption; and we see the undrels daily abusing piety, and wickedly making it the most abominable crimes. But for all that, we do make those distinctions which it is right we should do not envelop in the same warp of a false deduction he thing corrupted with the malice of the corrupter. parate the bad use from the honest intention of art, han we would dream of defending the banishment from Rome, or the public condemnation of philo- Athens, ought we to put a veto upon comedy for having ensured at certain times. This censuring had its reasons hich have no existence here. It confined itself strictly to what it saw; and we ought, therefore, not to drag it beyond the limits which it has adopted, extend it farther than necessary, or make it class the guilty with the innocent. The comedy which it designed to attack is not at all the comedy which we wish to defend. We must take good care not to confound the one with the other. They are two persons whose morals are totally opposed. They bear no relation to each other except the resemblance of the name; and it would be a crying injustice to wish to condemn Olympia, who is an honest woman, because there was another Olympia, who was a loose character.[20] Such verdicts would, doubtless, produce a great disorder in the world. Everything would be open to condemnation; and, since this rigour is not carried out with reference to all other things which are daily abused, we ought to extend the same grace to comedy, and approve those plays in which instruction and honesty are made manifest.

I am well aware that there are certain minds whose delicacy can tolerate no comedy whatsoever; who say that the most honest ones are the most dangerous; that the passions which they depict are so much the more touching because they are full of

[20] It has been said that Molière, in mentioning the name of Olympia, wished to hit at Olympia Maldachini, a sister-in-law of Pope Innocent X. This Pope died in 1655, and was the author of the bull against the five propositions of Jansenius. The life of the lady, who was far from a saint, had only lately been translated from the Italian into French.

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such great perfection be in the power of human n
whether it would not be better to endeavour to rectify
men's passions, than to eliminate them altogether.
there are places which it would be more salutary to f
theatres; and if we take it for granted that all thing
directly concern God and our salvation are reprehen
becomes certain that comedy should be one of th
one could not object that it should be condemned
But let us suppose, as it is true, that there must b
pious devotions, and that we have need of amusement
time, then I maintain that nothing more innocent than
could be found. I have digressed too far. Let me wind up w
the remark of a great prince[21] on the comedy of *Tartuffe*. A wee
after it had been forbidden, there was performed before the court
a piece entitled *Scaramouch a hermit*,[22] and the King, coming out
of the theatre, said to the prince of whom I have just spoken,
"I should like to know why the people, who are so very much
shocked at the comedy of Molière, do not say a word about *Scara-
mouch*," to which the prince answered, "The reason of that is,
that the comedy of *Scaramouch* makes game of Heaven and reli-
gion, about which these gentlemen care very little; but Molière's
makes game of them; it is that which they cannot tolerate."

[21] The Prince de Condé.

[22] The farce of *Scaramouch a hermit* contained many indecent situations; amongst others, that of a monk entering by the balcony into the house of a married woman, and reappearing from time to time before the public, saying, "*Questo e per morti ficar la carne.*"

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ORGON, *husband to Elmire.*[23]
DAMIS, *his son.*
VALÈRE, *Mariane's lover.*
CLÉANTE, *Orgon's brother-in-law.*
TARTUFFE.
M. LOYAL, *a tipstaff.*[24]
A POLICE-OFFICER.[25]
ELMIRE, *Orgon's wife.*
MADAME PERNELLE, *Orgon's mother.*
MARIANE, *Orgon's daughter.*
DORINE, *her maid.*
FLIPOTE, *Madame Pernelle's servant.*

The scene is in PARIS, *in* ORGON'S HOUSE.

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[23] This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, we find "the dress for Orgon consisting of a doublet, breeches, and cloak of black *vénitienne*, the cloak lined with tabby, and adorned with English lace, the garters, rosettes of the shoes, and the shoes adorned in the same manner." Madame Molière played the part of Elmire.

[24] The original has *sergent.* The tipstaffs of the upper court were called *huissiers;* in Paris, *huissiers à verge;* and of a lower court, *sergents.*

[25] The original has *exempt,* from the verb *exempter,* to be free from, because formerly non-commissioned officers of the cavalry, who commanded in the absence of their superiors, were free from all other duties, and were *exempt*; such officers commanded the *maréchaussée* or prevotal guard when it arrested anyone.

TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE.

(*TARTUFFE; OU, L'IMPOSTEUR.*)

ACT I. SCENE I.

MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, FLIPOTE.[26]

M. Per. Come along, Flipote, come along; let us get rid of them.

Elm. You walk so fast, that one can hardly keep up with you.

M. Per. Do not trouble yourself, daughter-in-law, do not trouble yourself, do not come any farther; there is no need for all this cerêmony.

Elm. We only give you your due. But pray, mother, why are you in such haste to leave us?

M. Per. Because I cannot bear to see such goings on. No one cares to please me. I leave your house very little edified: all my advice is despised; nothing is respected, every one has his say aloud, and it is just like the court of King Pétaud.[27]

Dor. If . . .

M. Per. You are, my dear, a little too much of a talker,

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[26] See Appendix, Note A.

[27] *Pétaud*, from the Latin *peto*, I ask, was formerly the name of the chief of the beggars in France. As his subordinates were very unruly, a house where everybody gave orders was called figuratively "the court of King Pétaud." In Mr Clare's translation, mentioned in the Introductory Notice, this court is called "Dover's Court."

and a great deal too saucy for a waiting-maid. You give your advice about everything.

Dam. But . . .

M. Per. Four letters spell your name, my child, a "fool:" I, your grandmother, tell you so; and I have already predicted to my son, your father, a hundred times, that you are fast becoming a good-for-nothing, who will give him nought but trouble.

Mar. I think . . .

M. Per. Good-lack! granddaughter, you play the prude, and to look at you, butter would not melt in your mouth. But still waters run deep, as the saying is; and I do not like your sly doings at all.

Elm. But, mother . . .

M. Per. By your leave, daughter-in-law, your whole conduct is altogether wrong; you ought to set them a good example; and their late mother managed them a great deal better. You are extravagant; and it disgusts me to see you decked out like a princess.[28] The woman who wishes to please her husband only, daughter-in-law, has no need of so much finery.

Clé. But after all, Madam . . .

M. Per. As for you, Sir, who are her brother, I esteem, love, and respect you very much; but, nevertheless, if I were my son and her husband, I would beg of you earnestly not to enter our house. You are always laying down maxims which respectable people ought not to follow. I speak

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[28] According to Grimarest's *Vie de Molière*, our author went into the dressing-room of his wife—who was going to play the part of Elmire—a quarter of an hour before the piece began. He found her clothed in a magnificent dress, which she had put on, without telling her husband of it. Molière insisted that she should put it off, and take one more in accordance with Elmire's character. I am afraid that this anecdote rests only on mere tradition; still it proves that Mrs Orgon was too well dressed to suit even the taste of her mother-in-law.

to you rather frankly; but it is a way I have got, and I do not mince my words when I have something on my mind.

Dam. Your Mr Tartuffe is an angel, no doubt . . . .

M. Per. He is a very worthy man, who ought to be listened to; and I cannot, without getting angry, suffer him to be sneered at by a fool like you.

Dam. What! am I to allow a censorious bigot to usurp an absolute authority in this house! and shall we not be permitted to amuse ourselves, unless that precious gentleman condescends to give us leave!

Dor. If any one were to listen to him and believe in his maxims, one could not do anything without committing a sin; for he controls everything, this carping critic.

M. Per. And whatever he does control, is well controlled. He wishes to lead you on the road to Heaven: and my son ought to make you all love him.

Dam. No, look here, grandmother, neither father nor anyone else shall ever induce me to look kindly upon him. I should belie my heart to say otherwise. His manners every moment enrage me; I can foresee the consequence, and one time or other I shall have to come to an open quarrel with this low-bred fellow.[29]

Dor. Certainly, it is a downright scandal to see a stranger exercise such authority in this house; to see a beggar, who, when he came, had not a shoe to his foot, and whose whole dress may have been worth twopence, so far forget himself as to cavil at everything, and to assume the authority of a master.

M. Per. Eh! mercy on me! things would go on much better if everything were managed according to his pious directions.

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[29] The original has *pied-plat*, flat foot,—I suppose on account of an imaginary connection between a high instep and aristocratic descent.

Dor. He passes for a saint in your opinion; but, believe me, he is nothing but a hypocrite.

M. Per. What a tongue!

Dor. I should not like to trust myself with with his man Laurent, without a good guarantee.

M. Per. I do not know what the servant may be at heart; but as for the master, I will vouch for him as a good man. You bear him ill-will, and only reject him because he tells all of you the truth. It is against sin that his heart waxes wroth, and his only motive is the interest of Heaven.

Dor. Ay; but why, particularly for some time past, can he not bear any one to come to the house? What is there offensive to Heaven in a civil visit, that there must be a noise about it fit to split one's ears? Between ourselves, do you wish me to explain? . . . [*Pointing to Elmire*] Upon my word, I believe him to be jealous of my mistress.

M. Per. Hold your tongue, and mind what you say. It is not he only who blames these visits. All the bustle of these people who frequent this house, these carriages everlastingly standing at the door, and the noisy crowd of so many servants, cause a great disturbance in the whole neighbourhood. I am willing to believe that there is really no harm done; but people will talk of it, and that is not right.

Clé. Alas, Madam, will you prevent people talking? It would be a very hard thing if, in life, for the sake of the foolish things which may be said about us, we had to renounce our best friends. And even if we could resolve to do so, do you think we could compel every one to hold his tongue? There is no protection against slander. Let us, therefore, pay no regard to all this silly tittle-tattle; let us endeavour to live honestly, and leave the gossips to say what they please.

Dor. May not Daphné, our neighbour, and her little

husband, be those who speak ill of us? They whose own conduct is the most ridiculous are always the first to slander others. They never fail to catch eagerly at the slightest rumour of a love-affair, to spread the news of it with joy, and to give it the turn which they want. They think to justify their own actions before the world by those of others, painted in colours of their choosing, either in the false expectation of glossing over their own intrigues with some semblance of innocence, or else by making to fall elsewhere some part of that public blame with which they are too heavily burdened.[30]

M. Per. All these arguments are nothing to the purpose. Orante is known to lead an exemplary life. All her cares tend to Heaven; and I have learned by people that she strongly condemns the company who visit here.

Dor. An admirable pattern indeed, and she is very good, this lady! It is true that she lives very austerely; but age has put this ardent zeal into her breast; people know that she is a prude, against her own will. She enjoyed her advantages well enough as long as she was capable of attracting attentions; but, seeing the lustre of her eyes become somewhat dim, she renounces the world which is renouncing her, and conceals, under the pompous cloak of lofty wisdom, the decay of her worn-out charms. These are the vicissitudes of coquettes in our time. They find it hard to see their admirers desert them. Thus forsaken, their gloomy anxiety sees no other resource but that of prudery; and the severity of these good women censures everything and pardons nothing.[31] Loudly they blame

[30] This is said to be an allusion to Olympia Mancini, Countess de Soissons, who spread a report, and even informed the queen, of the rising love of Louis XIV. for Mademoiselle de la Vallière. See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*, Vol. III., page 21, note 48.

[31] This is said to be a hit at the Duchess de Navailles (see Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*, Vol. III., page 22, note 57), who

everyone's life, not through charity, but through envy, which cannot bear another to enjoy those pleasures for which their age gives them no longer a relish.[32]

M. Per. [*To Elmire*] These are cock-and-bull stories, made to please you, daughter-in-law. One is obliged to keep silence here, for Madam keeps the ball rolling all day. But I also will have my say in my turn. I tell you that my son has never done anything more sensible than in receiving this devout personage in his house; that Heaven itself, in time of need, has sent him here to reclaim all your erring minds; that, for your salvation's sake, you ought to listen to him; and that he censures nothing but what is reprehensible. These visits, these balls, these conversations, are all inventions of the evil one. One never hears a pious word uttered at any of them; nothing but tittle-tattle, nonsense, and silly prattle. Very often our neighbour comes in for his share of it, and there is back-biting going on right and left. In short, sensible people have their heads turned by the confusion of such meetings. A thousand idle stories are told in no time; and, as a certain doctor said very aptly the other day, it is a perfect tower of Babylon,[33] for everyone chatters to his heart's content; and to show you what brought this up . . . [*Pointing to Cléante*] But here is

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caused iron railings to be placed at the entrance of the rooms of the maids of honour, in order to prevent Louis XIV. from visiting Mademoiselle de Lamothe Houdancourt. The duchess owed her fortune to Cardinal Mazarin, whose intrigues she had aided during the troubles of the Fronde, when she was Mademoiselle de Neuillant.

[32] The *Lettre sur l' Imposteur* (see Introductory Notice to this play) mentions a couplet of Madame Pernelle, and a biting answer of Cléante, which were spoken at the first representation of *Tartuffe*, then called *l' Imposteur*, and which, no doubt, Molière afterwards suppressed.

[33] Madame Pernelle says "the Tower of Babylon," instead of "the Tower of Babel." A certain Jesuit, Caussin (1583-1651), wrote in one of his books, *The Holy Court*, that "men built the tower of Babel, and women the tower of Babble (*Babil*)."

this gentleman giggling already! Go and look for some fools to laugh at, and without . . . [*To Elmire*] Good bye, daughter-in-law; I will say no more. I make you a present of the rest, but it will be a fine day when I set my foot in your house again. [*Slapping Flipote's face*] Come along you, you stand dreaming and gaping here. Ods bobs! I shall warm your ears for you. March on, slut, march on.

SCENE II.

CLÉANTE, DORINE.

Clé. I shall not go with her, for fear she should fall foul of me again; that this good lady . . .

Dor. Ah! it is a pity that she does not hear you say so: she would tell you that you are good, but that she is not yet old enough to be called so.

Clé. How she fired up against us for nothing! And how infatuated she seems with her Tartuffe!

Dor. Oh! indeed, all this is nothing compared with the son: and if you saw him, you would say it is much worse. During our troubles[34] he acted like a man of sense, and displayed some courage in the service of his prince;[35] but since he has grown so fond of this Tartuffe, he is become a perfect dolt. He calls him brother, and loves him in his very soul a hundred times better than either mother, son, daughter, or wife. He is the sole confidant of all his secrets, and the prudent director of all his actions; he caresses him, he embraces him; and one could show no more affection, I think, to a mistress. He will have him seated at the upper end of the table, and is delighted to see him

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[34] This refers to the troubles of the Fronde, during the minority of Louis XIV.

[35] The *Lettre sur l' Imposteur* shows that this play was originally somewhat different here.

eat as much as half a dozen; the choicest morsels of everything must be given to him; and, if he happens to belch, he says to him "God preserve you."[36] In short, he is crazy about him; he is his all, his hero; he admires everything he does, he quotes him on all occasions; he looks upon his most trifling actions as miracles, and every word he utters is considered an oracle. The other, who knows his dupe, and wishes to make the most of him, has the art of dazzling him by a hundred deceitful appearances. His pretended devotion draws money from him at every hour of the day; and assumes the right of commenting upon the conduct of every one of us. Even the jackanapes, his servant, pretends also to read us a lesson; he comes preaching to us with fierce looks, and throws away our ribbons, our paint, and our patches. Only the other day, the wretch tore a handkerchief which he had found between the leaves of "*The Flower of the Saints*,"[37] saying that it was a dreadful sin to bring these holy things into contact with the devil's deckings.

SCENE III.

ELMIRE, MARIANE, DAMIS, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

Elm. [*To Cléante*] You are very fortunate not to have assisted at the speech to which she treated us at the door.

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[36] All the original editions have the following note, which may probably be attributed to Molière: "It is a servant who speaks."

[37] This book was called *Flos Sanctorum, o libro de las vidas de los Santos*, and was written by Pedro Ribadeneira, a celebrated Spanish Jesuit (1527-1611). It was translated into French as *Fleurs des vies des Saints*, and published in Paris in 1641, and at Lyons in 1666, in two folio volumes; and later in English, as *Lives of the Saints*, and in the same number of volumes. There was also another book, originally in French, with the same title, written by a Jesuit, Bonnefons, published first in 1663, and which had already reached its third edition in 1664.

But I have just seen my husband; and as he did not see me, I shall go up stairs to await his coming.

Clé. I will wait for him here, with small pleasure; and merely say how do ye do to him.

SCENE IV.

CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE.

Dam. Just sound him about this marriage of my sister. I suspect that Tartuffe is opposed to it, because he makes my father use so many evasions; and you are not ignorant how greatly I am interested in it. . . . If the same passion fires my sister's and Valère's heart, the sister of this friend is, as you know, dear to me; and if it were necessary . . .

Dor. Here he is.

SCENE V.

ORGON, CLÉANTE, DORINE.[38]

Org. Ha! good morrow, brother.

Clé. I was just going, and am glad to see you returned. The country is not very cheering at present.

Org. Dorine. . . . [*To Cléante*] Pray, one moment, brother-in-law. Allow me to inquire the news here to ease my mind. [*To Dorine*] Has everything gone on well these two days? What are they doing, and how are they all?

Dor. The day before yesterday my mistress had an attack of fever until evening, accompanied by an extraordinary headache.

Org. And Tartuffe?

Dor. Tartuffe! He is wonderfully well, stout and fat, with a fresh complexion, and a ruddy mouth.

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[38] See Appendix, Note B.

Org. Poor fellow!

Dor. In the evening she felt very sick, and could not touch a morsel of supper, so violent was still the pain in her head.

Org. And Tartuffe?

Dor. He supped by himself in her presence; and very devoutly ate two partridges, and half a leg of mutton hashed.

Org. Poor fellow!

Dor. The whole night she did not close her eyes for a moment. She was so feverish that she could not sleep, and we were obliged to sit up with her until morning.

Org. And Tartuffe?

Dor. Pleasantly overcome with sleep, he went to his room when he left the table; and jumped into his cozy bed, where he slept undisturbed until morning.

Org. Poor fellow!

Dor. We at length prevailed upon the mistress to be bled; and she was almost immediately relieved.

Org. And Tartuffe?

Dor. He picked up his courage again as he ought to; and, to fortify himself against all harm, he drank four large draughts of wine at breakfast, to make up for the blood that the mistress had lost.

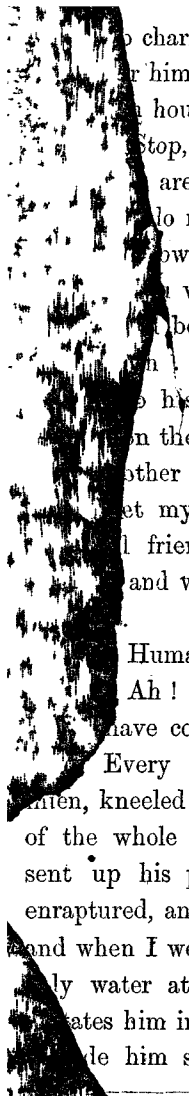
Org. Poor fellow!

Dor. At present, they are both well; and I shall go and inform the mistress how glad you feel at her recovery.

SCENE VI.

ORGON, CLÉANTE.

Clé. She is laughing at you to your face, brother; and, without wishing to make you angry, I must tell you candidly that it is not without reason. Was there ever such a whim heard of? Can it be possible that any man



charm you now-a-days as to make you forget every-
him? That after having relieved his indigence in
house, you should go as far as . . .
Stop, brother-in-law, you do not know the man of
are speaking?
do not know him, if you like; but after all, in
ow what sort of man he is . . .
would be charmed to know him brother; and
be no end to your delight. He is a man . . .
. . . a man . . . in short, a man.[39] One who
his own precepts, enjoys a profound peace, and
n the whole world as so much dirt. Yes; I am
other man since I conversed with him; he teaches
et my heart upon nothing; he detaches my mind
friendship; and I could see brother, children,
and wife die, without troubling myself in the least

Humane sentiments these, brother!

Ah! if you had seen how I first met him, you
ave conceived the same friendship for him that I
Every day he came to church, and, with a gentle
ien, kneeled down opposite me. He attracted the notice
of the whole congregation by the fervency with which he
sent up his prayers to heaven. He uttered sighs, was
enraptured, and humbly kissed the ground every moment:
nd when I went out, he swiftly ran before me to offer me
ly water at the door. Informed by his servant, who
ates him in everything, of his poverty, and who he was,
le him some presents: but, with great modesty, he

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ine has given rise to many different readings; but according to
l' Imposteur, and of which a *résumé* is given in the Intro-
to this play, Orgon intends to quote all the good
uffe, and can find nothing else to say of him but that he

always wished to return some part of them. "I
much," he said; "too much by half; I do not dese
pity." And when I refused to take them back
would go and give them to the poor before my
length Heaven moved me to take him to my house
then, everything seems to prosper here. I perce
reproves everything, and that he takes a great i
in my wife, for my sake. He warns me of the
look too lovingly at her, and he is six times m
her than I am. But you cannot believe how f
goes: the slightest trifle in himself he calls a si
nothing is sufficient to shock him; so much s
accused himself, the other day, of having caught a f
he was at his devotions, and of having killed it
much anger.[40]

Clé. Zounds! I believe you are mad, brother.
making game of me with such a speech? and do you
that all this fooling . . .

Org. Brother, this discourse savours of free-th

[40] Molière takes care to demonstrate, from the very beg
that Tartuffe is a hypocrite, and the whole speech of Orgon show
to be so. The killing of the flea is taken from the life of Sain
Macarius in Giacomo da Voragine (1230-1298), *Historia Lombardica, seu Legenda Sanctorum*, which was more familiarly known as the *Legenda aurea*, or *Golden Legend*. The first English edition was one of the books which Caxton printed and published in 1483. The story is thus related, by the Rev. Alban Butler, in *The Lives of the Saints*: "Saint Macarius happened one day to kill a gnat that was biting hi
in his cell; reflecting that he had lost the opportunity of suffering t
mortification, he hastened from the cell for the marshes of Scetè, v
abound with great flies, whose stings pierce even wild boars. Th
continued six months, exposed to those ravaging insects; and t
degree was his whole body disfigured by them with sores and
that when he returned, he was only to be known by his voi

[41] The original has *libertinage*, which, as well as *libertin*,
formerly employed in French, as well as in English, in sp
who took great liberty with the belief generally entert
III., page 108, note 9.

somewhat tainted with it; and, as I have often you will get yourself into some unpleasant scrape. The usual clap-trap of your set; they wish everyblind like themselves. To keep one's eyes open is to be a free-thinker; and whosoever does not worship pretentious affection has neither respect for, nor faith in holy things. Go along; all your speeches do not frighten me; I know what I am saying, and Heaven sees my heart. We are not the slaves of your formalists. There are hypocrites in religion as well as pretenders to courage; and as we never find the truly brave man make much noise where honour leads him, no more are the good and truly pious, whom we ought to follow, those who make so many grimaces. What! would you make no distinction between hypocrisy and true devotion? Would you treat them both alike, and give the same honour to the mask as to the face; put artifice on a level with sincerity, confound appearance with reality, value the shadow as much as the substance; and false coin the same as real? Men, for the most part, are strange creatures, and never keep the right mean; reason's boundaries are too narrow for them; in every character they overact their parts; and they often spoil the noblest designs, because they exaggerate, and carry them too far. This by the way, brother.

Org. Yes, you are no doubt a doctor to be looked up to; you possess all the world's wisdom; you are the only sage, and the only enlightened man, an oracle, a Cato of the present age; and all men, compared with you, are fools.

Clé. I am not, brother, a doctor to be looked up to; nor do I possess all the world's wisdom. But, in one word, I know enough to distinguish truth from falsehood. And as I know no character more worthy of esteem than the truly devout, nor anything in the world more noble or beautiful than the holy fervour of sincere piety, so I know nothing more odious than the whited sepulchre of a pretended zealot, than those

downright impostors, those devotees for public show, whose sacrilegious and deceitful grimaces abuse with impunity and make a jest, according to their fancy, of what men most holy and sacred; those men who, from motives of self-interest, make a trade of piety, and would purchase honour and reputation at the cost of a hypocritical turning up of the eyes and pretended raptures; those men, I say, whom we see possessed with such an uncommon ardour for the next world, in order to make their fortunes in this; who, with great affectation and many prayers, daily recommend and preach solitude in the midst of the court; who know how to reconcile their zeal with their vices; who are passionate, vindictive, without belief, full of artifice, and would, in order to destroy a man, insolently cover their fierce resentment under the cloak of Heaven's interests. They are the more dangerous in their bitter wrath because they use against us weapons which men reverence, and because their passion, for which they are commended, prompts them to assassinate us with a consecrated blade. One sees too many of these vile characters, but the really devout at heart are easily recognised. Our age has shown us some, brother, who may serve us as glorious examples. Look at Ariston, look at Périandre, Oronte, Alcidamas, Polydore, Clitandre—no one disputes their title. But they do not boast of their virtue. One does not see this unbearable ostentation in them; and their piety is human, is tractable: they do not censure all our doings, they think that these corrections would show too much pride on their part; and, leaving big words to others, they reprove our actions by their own. They do not think anything evil, because it seems so, and

[42] The original has *dévots de place*. In former times, servants who wished to be hired, went to the market-place to show themselves; these were called *domestiques de place;* hence Molière coined *dévots de place.*

their mind is inclined to judge well of others. They have no cabals, no intrigues; all their anxiety is to live well themselves. They never persecute a sinner; they hate the sin only, and do not vindicate the interest of Heaven with greater zeal than Heaven itself. These are my people, that is the true way to act; that is, in short, an example to be followed. To say the truth, your man is not of that stamp: you vaunt his zeal with the best intention; but I believe that you are dazzled by a false glare.

Org. My dear brother-in-law, have you had your say?

Clé. Yes.

Org. [*Going*] I am your humble servant.

Cle. Pray, one word more, brother. Let us drop this conversation. You know that Valère has your promise to be your son-in-law.[43]

Org. Yes.

Clé. And that you would appoint a day for the wedding.

Org. True.

Clé. Why then defer the ceremony?

Org. I do not know.

Clé. Have you another design in your mind?

Org. Perhaps so.

Clé. Will you break your word?

Org. I do not say that.

Clé. There is no obstacle, I think, to prevent you from fulfilling your promise?

Org. That is as it may be.

Clé. Why so much ado about a single word? Valère sent me to you about it.

Org. Heaven be praised for that!

Clé. But what answer shall I give him?

Org. Whatever you please.

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[43] See Appendix, Note C.

Clé. But it is necessary to know your intentions. What are they?

Org. To do just what Heaven ordains.

Clé. But to the point. Valère has your promise: will you keep it or not?

Org. Farewell.

Clé. [*Alone*] I fear some misfortune for his love, and I ought to inform him of what is going on.[44]

ACT II. SCENE I.

ORGON, MARIANE.

Org. Mariane.

Mar. Father?

Org. Come here; I have something to say to you privately.

Mar. [*To Orgon, who is looking into a closet*] What are you looking for?

Org. I am looking whether there is anyone there who

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[44] Several of Molière's annotators greatly praise this first act, which gives, as it were, a key to the whole comedy. We see at one glance the interior of Orgon's household: the silly talk of an old woman; the foolish infatuation of the master of the house for Tartuffe; the pretended religious zeal of that hypocrite; the quiet reserve of Elmire; the impetuosity of Damis, the son; the sound philosophy of Cléante; the familiarity and sharpness of the servant Dorine; the gentle timidity of Mariane; everything which afterwards comes out in the play is foreshadowed there, even the passion of Tartuffe for Elmire. This first act also shows how everything in the house is in dire confusion; religious war rages there with all the intensity of the *odium theologicum;* the grandmother has become the foe of her son's children; the father wishes to tyrannize over his daughter and every one else; whilst, on the other side, Damis is always in a rage, Dorine for ever on the verge of impudence, and even the calm Cléante appears to have some difficulty in keeping his temper. The spirit with which Molière opens the first act is kept up throughout the whole piece.

might overhear us; for it is a most likely little place for such a purpose.[45] Now we are all right. Mariane, I have always found you of a sweet disposition, and you have also always been very dear to me.

Mar. I am much obliged to you for this fatherly affection.

Org. That is very well said, daughter; and to deserve it, your only care should be to please me.

Mar. That is my greatest ambition.

Org. Very well. What say you of our guest Tartuffe?

Mar. Who? I?

Org. You. Be careful how you answer.

Mar. Alas! I will say whatever you like of him.

SCENE II.

ORGON, MARIANE, DORINE, *entering softly, and keeping behind Orgon, without being seen.*[46]

Org. That is sensibly spoken . . . Tell me then, my child, that he is a man of the highest worth; that he has touched your heart; and that it would be pleasant to you to see him, with my approbation, become your husband. He?

[*Mariane draws away with surprise.*

Mar. He?

Org. What is the matter?

Mar. What did you say?

Org. What?

Mar. Did I mistake?

Org. How?

Mar. Who would you have me say has touched my

[45] It is from this "most likely little place" that Damis, in the third Scene of the third Act, overhears Tartuffe declaring his love to Elmire. Molière always takes care to throw out such hints, in order to prepare the mind for what is to come.

[46] See Appendix, Note D.

heart, father, and whom would it be pleasant to have for a husband, with your approbation?

Org. Tartuffe.

Mar. But it is nothing of the kind, father, I assure you. Why would you have me tell such a falsehood?

Org. But I wish it to be a truth; and it is sufficient for you that I have resolved it so.

Mar. What, father! would you . . .

Org. Yes, daughter, I intend by your marriage to unite Tartuffe to my family. He shall be your husband; I have decided that; and as on your duty I . . . [*Perceiving Dorine*] What are you doing here? Your anxious curiosity is very great, my dear, to induce you to listen to us in this manner.

Dor. In truth, I do not know whether this is a mere report, arising from conjecture or from chance; but they have just told me the news of this marriage, and I treated it as a pure hoax.

Org. Why so! Is the thing incredible?

Dor. So much so, that even from you, Sir, I do not believe it.

Org. I know how to make you believe it, though.

Dor. Yes, yes, you are telling us a funny story.

Org. I am telling you exactly what you will see shortly.

Dor. Nonsense!

Org. What I say is not in jest, daughter.

Dor. Come, do not believe your father; he is joking.

Org. I tell you . . .

Dor. No, you may say what you like; nobody will believe you.

Org. My anger will at last . . .

Dor. Very well! we will believe you then; and so much the worse for you. What! is it possible, Sir, that, with that air of common sense, and this great beard in the very

midst of your face, you would be foolish enough to be willing to . . .

Org. Now listen: you have taken certain liberties in this house, which I do not like; I tell you so, my dear.

Dor. Let us speak without getting angry, Sir, I beg. Is it to laugh at people that you have planned this scheme? Your daughter is not suitable for a bigot: he has other things to think about. And, besides, what will such an alliance bring you? Why, with all your wealth, go and choose a beggar for a son-in-law . . .

Org. Hold your tongue. If he has nothing, know that it is just for that that we ought to esteem him. His poverty is no doubt an honest poverty; it ought to raise him above all grandeur, because he has allowed himself to be deprived of his wealth by his little care for worldly affairs, and his strong attachment to things eternal. But my assistance may give him the means of getting out of his troubles, and of recovering his property. His estates are well known in his country; and, such as you see him, he is quite the nobleman.

Dor. Yes, so he says; and this vanity, Sir, does not accord well with piety. Whosoever embraces the innocence of a holy life should not boast so much about his name and his lineage; and the humble ways of piety do but ill agree with this outburst of ambition. What is the good of this pride . . . But this discourse offends you: let us speak of himself, and leave his nobility alone. Would you, without some compunction, give a girl like her to a man like him? And ought you not to have some regard for propriety, and foresee the consequences of such a union? Be sure that a girl's virtue is in danger when her choice is thwarted in her marriage; that her living virtuously depends upon the qualities of the husband whom they have chosen for her, and that those whose foreheads are pointed

at everywhere often make of their wives what we see that they are. It is, in short, no easy task to be faithful to husbands cut out after a certain model; and he who gives to his daughter a man whom she hates, is responsible to Heaven for the faults which she commits. Consider to what perils your design exposes you.

Org. I tell you, I must learn from her what to do!

Dor. You cannot do better than follow my advice.

Org. Do not let us waste any more time with this silly prattle, daughter; I am your father, and know what is best for you. I had promised you to Valère; but besides his being inclined to gamble, as I am told, I also suspect him to be somewhat of a free-thinker; I never notice him coming to church.

Dor. Would you like him to run there at your stated hours, like those who go there only to be seen?

Org. I am not asking your advice upon that. The other candidate for your hand is, in short, on the best of terms with Heaven, and that is a treasure second to none. This union will crown your wishes with every kind of blessings, it will be replete with sweetness and delight. You shall live together in faithful love, really like two children, like two turtle-doves; there will be no annoying disputes between you; and you will make anything you like of him.

Dor. She? she will never make anything but a fool[47] of him, I assure you.

Org. Heyday! what language!

Dor. I say that he has the appearance of one, and that his destiny, Sir, will be stronger than all your daughter's virtue.

Org. Leave off interrupting me, and try to hold your tongue, without poking your nose into what does not concern you.

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[47] The original has *sot*, which often meant also a victimised husband.

Dor. [*She continually interrupts him when he turns round to speak to his daughter*] I speak only for your interest, Sir.

Org. You interest yourself too much; hold your tongue, if you please.

Dor. If one did not care for you . . .

Org. I do not wish you to care for me.

Dor. And I will care for you, Sir, in spite of yourself.

Org. Ah!

Dor. Your honour is dear to me, and I cannot bear to see you the byeword of everyone.

Org. You will not hold your tongue?

Dor. It is a matter of conscience to allow you to form such an alliance.

Org. Will you hold your tongue, you serpent, whose brazen face . . .

Dor. What! you are religious, and you fly in a rage!

Org. Yes, all your nonsense has excited my choler, and once for all, you shall hold your tongue.

Dor. Be it so. But, though I do not say a word, I will think none the less.

Org. Think, if you like; but take care not to say a word, or . . . [*Turning to his daughter*] That will do. As a sensible man, I have carefully weighed everything.

Dor. [*Aside*] It drives me mad that I must not speak.

Org. Without being a fop, Tartuffe's mien is such . . .

Dor. Yes, his is a very pretty phiz!

Org. That even if you have no sympathy with his other gifts . . .

Dor. [*Aside*] She has got a bargain! [*Orgon turns to Dorine, and, with crossed arms, listens and looks her in the face*] If I were in her place, assuredly no man should marry me against my will with impunity; and I would show

him, and that soon after the ceremony, that a woman has always a revenge at hand.

Org. [*To Dorine*] Then you do not heed what I say?

Dor. What are you grumbling at? I did not speak to you.

Org. What did you do then?

Dor. I was speaking to myself.

Org. [*Aside*] Very well! I must give her a back-hander to pay her out for her extreme insolence. [*He puts himself into a position to slap Dorine's face; and, at every word which he says to his daughter, he turns round to look at Dorine, who stands bolt upright without speaking*] You ought to approve of my plan, daughter . . . and believe that the husband whom I have selected for you . . . [*To Dorine*] Why do you not speak to yourself?

Dor. I have nothing to say to myself.

Org. Just another little word.

Dor. It does not suit me.

Org. I was looking out for you, be sure.

Dor. I am not such a fool as you think me!

Org. In short, daughter, you must obey, and show a complete deference to my choice.

Dor. [*Running away*] I would not care a straw for such a husband.

Org. [*Failing to slap Dorine's face*] You have a pestilent hussy with you, daughter, with whom I cannot put up any longer without forgetting myself. I do not feel equal to continue our conversation now; her insolent remarks have set my brain on fire, and I must have a breath of air to compose myself.

SCENE III.

MARIANE, DORINE.

Dor. Tell me, have you lost your speech? And must I act your part in this affair? To allow such a senseless

proposal to be made to you, without saying the least word against it!

Mar. What would you have me do against a tyrannical father?

Dor. That which is necessary to ward off such a threat.

Mar. What?

Dor. Tell him that you cannot love by proxy, that you marry for yourself, and not for him; that you being the only one concerned in this matter, it is you, and not he, who must like the husband, and that since Tartuffe is so charming in his eyes, he may marry him himself without let or hindrance.

Mar. Ah! a father, I confess, has so much authority over us, that I have never had the courage to answer him.

Dor. But let us argue this affair. Valère has proposed for you: do you love him, pray, or do you not?

Mar. Ah! you do my feelings great injustice, Dorine, to ask me such a question. Have I not a hundred times opened my heart to you? and do not you know the warmth of my affection for him?

Dor. How do I know whether your lips have spoken what your heart felt? and whether you have any real regard for this lover?

Mar. You wrong me greatly in doubting it, Dorine; for my true sentiments have been but too clearly shown.

Dor. You really love him, then?

Mar. Yes, very passionately.

Dor. And, to all appearance, he loves you as well?

Mar. I believe so.

Dor. And you are both equally eager to marry each other?

Mar. Assuredly.

Dor. What do you expect from this other match then?

Mar. To kill myself, if they force me to it.

Dor. Very well. That is a resource I did not think of; you have only to die to get out of trouble. The remedy is doubtless admirable. It drives me mad to hear this sort of talk.

Mar. Good gracious! Dorine, what a temper you get into! You do not sympathize in the least with people's troubles.

Dor. I do not sympathize with people who talk stupidly, and, when an opportunity presents itself, give way as you do!

Mar. But what would you have me do? If I am timid . . .

Dor. Love requires firmness.

Mar. But have I wavered in my affection towards Valère? and is it not his duty to obtain a father's consent?

Dor. But what! if your father is a downright churl, who is completely taken up with his Tartuffe, and will break off a match he had agreed on, is your lover to be blamed for that?

Mar. But am I, by a flat refusal and a scornful disdain, to let everyone know how much I am smitten? However brilliant Valère may be, am I to forget the modesty of my sex, and my filial duty? And would you have me display my passion to the whole world . . .

Dor. No, I would have you do nothing of the sort. I perceive that you would like to be Mr Tartuffe's; and I should be wrong, now that I come to think of it, to turn you from such a union. What right have I to oppose your wishes? The match in itself is very advantageous. Monsieur Tartuffe! oh, oh! is no small fry. Certainly Monsieur Tartuffe, all things considered, is no fool;[48] no,

[48] The original has "*Monsieur Tartuffe . . . n'est pas un homme . . . qui se mouche du pied;*" literally, "Mr Tartuffe . . . is not a man who blows his nose with his foot." To pretend to blow one's nose with one's foot was considered a favourite trick of jugglers and acrobats; hence a man who could do such a thing was no fool.

not at all, and it is no small honour to be his better half. Already every one crowns him with glory. He is a noble in his own country, handsome in appearance; he has red ears and a florid complexion. You will live only too happily with such a husband.

Mar. Good gracious! . . .

Dor. How joyful you will be to see yourself the wife of such a handsome husband!

Mar. Ah! leave off such talk, I pray, and rather assist me to free myself from this match. It is finished; I yield, and, am ready to do anything.

Dor. No, a daughter ought to obey her father, even if he wishes her to marry an ape. Yours is an enviable fate: of what do you complain? You will drive down in the stage-coach to his native town, where you will find plenty of uncles and cousins, whom it will be your great delight to entertain. You will be introduced directly into the best society. You will go and pay the first visits to the wife of the bailie,[49] and of the assessor,[50] who will do you the honour of giving you a folding-chair.[51] There, at carnival time, you may expect a ball, with the grand band[52] of musicians, to

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[49] The *bailli*, whose office dates probably from the eleventh century, was the representative of the king or lord in the northern provinces of France; whilst in the west and south he was called *sénéchal*. But, in Molière's time, the duties of their office had been much reduced; they could no longer call out the military force, or regulate the finances of any province. They were simply a kind of minor judges, though nominally at the head of the provincial nobility.

[50] In French *l'élue*. The *élu* was a kind of assessor who regulated the taxes.

[51] A folding-chair was always given to people of inferior rank to sit on when in the presence of their superiors.

[52] In French *la grand' bande*. In Molière's time any band of musicians was called *une bande*, just as in English "band" is used now. There was then at Court *la bande des Vingt-Quatre*, or the great violins, and *la petite bande*, or the little violins, of which Lulli was the conductor. There was also a third *bande*, that of the *Grande-Écurie*.

wit, two bagpipes, and sometimes Fagotin[53] and the marionnettes. If your husband, however . . .

Mar. Oh! you kill me. Try rather to assist me with your counsels.

Dor. I am your servant.

Mar. Ah! for pity's sake, Dorine . . .

Dor. This affair ought to go on, to punish you.

Mar. There is a good girl!

Dor. No.

Mar. If I declare to you that . . .

Dor. Not at all. Tartuffe is your man, and you shall have a taste of him.

Mar. You know that I have always confided in you: do . . .

Dor. No, it is of no use, you shall be Tartuffed.

Mar. Very well, since my misfortunes cannot move you, leave me henceforth entirely to my despair. My heart shall seek help from that; and I know an infallible remedy for my sufferings. [*She wishes to go.*

Dor. Stop, stop, come back. I give in. In spite of all, I must take compassion on you.

Mar. Look here, Dorine, if they inflict this cruel martyrdom upon me, I shall die of it, I tell you.

Dor. Do not worry yourself. We will cleverly prevent . . . But here comes Valère, your lover.

SCENE IV.

VALÈRE, MARIANE, DORINE.[54]

Val. I have just been told a piece of news, Madam, which I did not know, and which is certainly very pretty.

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[53] Fagotin was the name of a famous trained monkey, very much admired in Paris, in Molière's time. La Fontaine mentions him in his fable of *The Court of the Lion.*

[54] See Appendix, Note E.

What is it?

That you are going to be married to Tartuffe.

y father has taken this idea into his head, cer-

ur father, Madam . . .

altered his mind: he has just proposed this

t! seriously?

eriously, he has openly declared himself for

what have you decided, in your own mind,

not.

swer is polite. You know not?

No?

Mar. What do you advise me?

Val. I, I advise you to take this husband.

Mar. Is that your advice?

Val. Yes.

Mar. Seriously?

Val. Doubtless. The choice is glorious, and well worth consideration.

Mar. Very well, Sir, I shall act upon the advice.

Val. That will not be very painful, I think.

Mar. Not more painful than for you to give it.

Val. I gave it to please you, Madam.

Mar. And I shall follow it to please you.

Dor. [*Retiring to the farther part of the stage*] Let us see what this will come to.

Val. This then is your affection? And it was all deceit when you . . .

Mar. Do not let us speak of that, I pray. You have told me quite candidly that I ought to accept the husband

selected for me: and I declare that I intend to do
you give me this wholesome advice.

Val. Do not make my advice your excuse.
lution was taken beforehand; and you catch at
pretext to justify the breaking of your word.

Mar. Very true, and well put.

Val. No doubt; and you never had any r
for me.

Mar. Alas! think so if you like.

Val. Yes, yes, if I like; but my offended
perhaps forestall you in such a design; and
to offer both my heart and my hand.

Mar. Ah! I have no doubt of it; and
merit can command . . .

Val. For Heaven's sake, let us drop merit.
little, no doubt; and you have given proof of it.
hope much from the kindness of some one whose heart is open to me, and who will not be ashamed to consent to repair my loss.

Mar. The loss is not great; and you will easily enough console yourself for this change.

Val. I shall do my utmost, you may depend. A heart that forgets us wounds our self-love; we must do our best to forget it also; if we do not succeed, we must at least pretend to do so: for the meanness is unpardonable of still loving when we are forsaken.

Mar. This is, no doubt, an elevated and noble sentiment. —

Val. It is so; and every one must approve of it. What! would you have me for ever to nourish my ardent affection for you, and not elsewhere bestow that heart which you reject, whilst I see you, before my face, pass into the arms of another?

Mar. On the contrary; as for me, that is what I would have you do, and I wish it were done already.

Val. You wish it?

Mar. Yes.

Val. That is a sufficient insult, Madam; and I shall satisfy you this very moment. [*He pretends to go.*

Mar. Very well.

Val. [*Coming back*] Remember at least, that you yourself drive me to this extremity.

Mar. Yes.

Val. [*Coming back once more*] And that I am only following your example.

Mar. Very well, my example.

Val. [*Going*] That will do: you shall be obeyed on the spot.

Mar. So much the better.

Val. [*Coming back again*] This is the last time that you will ever see me.

Mar. That is right.

Val. [*Goes, and turns round at the door*] He?

Mar. What is the matter?

Val. Did not you call me?

Mar. I! You are dreaming.

Val. Well! then I will be gone. Farewell, Madam. [*He goes slowly.*

Mar. Farewell, Sir.

Dor. [*To Mariane*] I think that you are losing your senses with all this folly. I have all along allowed you to quarrel, to see what it would lead to at last. Hullo, Mr Valère. [*She takes hold of Valère's arm.*

Val. [*Pretending to resist*] He? what do you want, Dorine?

Dor. Come here.

Val. No, no, I feel too indignant. Do not hinder me from doing as she wishes me.

Dor. Stop.

Val. No; look here, I have made up my mind.

Dor. Ah!

Mar. [*Aside*] He cannot bear to see me, my presence drives him away; and I had therefore much better leave the place.

Dor. [*Quitting Valère and running after Mariane*] Now for the other! Where are you running to?

Mar. Let me alone.

Dor. You must come back.

Mar. No, no, Dorine; it is of no use detaining me.

Val. [*Aside*] I see, but too well, that the sight of me annoys her; and I had, no doubt, better free her from it.

Dor. [*Leaving Mariane and running after Valère*] What, again! The devil take you! Yes. I will have it so. Cease this fooling, and come here both of you.

[*She holds them both.*

Val. [*To Dorine*] But what are you about?

Mar. [*To Dorine*] What would you do?

Dor. I would have you make it up together, and get out of this scrape. [*To Valère*] Are you mad to wrangle in this way?

Val. Did you not hear how she spoke to me?

Dor. [*To Mariane*] Are you silly to have got into such a passion?

Mar. Did you not see the thing, and how he has treated me?

Dor. Folly on both sides. [*To Valère*] She has no other wish than to remain yours, I can vouch for it. [*To Mariane*] He loves none but you, and desires nothing more than to be your husband. I will answer for it with my life.

Mar. [*To Valère*] Why then did you give me such advice?

Val. [*To Mariane*] Why did you ask me for it on such a subject?

Dor. You are a pair of fools. Come, your hands, both of you. [*To Valère*] Come, yours.

Val. [*Giving his hand to Dorine*] What is the good of my hand?

Dor. [*To Mariane*] Come now! yours.

Mar. [*Giving hers*] What is the use of all this?

Dor. Good Heavens! quick, come on. You love each other better than you think. [*Valère and Mariane hold each other's hands for some time, without speaking.*

Val. [*Turning towards Mariane*] Do not do things with such a bad grace, and cast a glance upon one without any hatred. [*Mariane turns to Valère, and smiles on him.*

Dor. Truth to tell, lovers are great fools!

Val. [*To Mariane*] Now really! have I no reason to complain of you; and, without an untruth, are you not a naughty girl to delight in saying disagreeable things?

Mar. And you, are you not the most ungrateful fellow . . .

Dor. Leave all this debate till another time, and let us think about averting this confounded marriage.

Mar. Tell us, then, what we are to do.

Dor. We must do many things. [*To Mariane*] Your father does but jest; [*to Valère*] and it is all talk. [*To Mariane*] But as for you, you had better appear to comply quietly with his nonsense, so that, in case of need, it may be easier for you to put off this proposed marriage. In gaining time, we gain everything. Sometimes you can pretend a sudden illness, that will necessitate a delay; then you can pretend some evil omens, that you unluckily met a corpse, broke a looking-glass, or dreamed of muddy water. In short, the best of it is that they cannot unite you to any one else but him, unless you please to say yes. But, the better to succeed, I think it advisable that you should not be seen talking together. [*To Valère*] Now go; and without delay, employ your friends to make

Orgon keep his promise to you. We will interest her brother, and enlist her mother-in-law on our side. Good bye.

Val. [*To Mariane*] Whatever efforts we may make together, my greatest hope, to tell the truth, is in you.

Mar. [*To Valère*] I cannot answer for the will of a father; but I shall be no one but Valère's.

Val. Oh, how happy you make me! And, whatever they may attempt . . .

Dor. Ah! lovers are never weary of prattling. Be off, I tell you.

Val. [*Goes a step, and returns*] After all . . .

Dor. What a cackle! Go you this way; and you, the other. [*Dorine pushes each of them by the shoulder, and compels them to separate.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

DAMIS, DORINE.

Dam. May lightning strike me dead on the spot, may every one treat me as the greatest of scoundrels, if any respect or authority shall stop me from doing something rash!

Dor. Curb this temper for Heaven's sake: your father did but mention it. People do not carry out all their proposals; and the road between the saying and the doing is a long one.

Dam. I must put a stop to this fellow's plots, and whisper a word or two in his ear.

Dor. Gently, pray! leave him, and your father as well, to your mother-in-law's management. She has some influence with Tartuffe; he agrees to all that she says, and I should not wonder if he had some sneaking regard for her.

Would to Heaven that it were true! A pretty thing that *would be!*[55] *In short, your interest* obliges her to send for him: she wishes to sound him about this marriage that troubles you, to know his intentions, and to acquaint him with the sad contentions which he may cause, if he entertains any hope on this subject. His servant told me he was at prayers, and that I could not get sight of him; but said that he was coming down. Go, therefore, I pray you, and let me wait for him.

Dam. I may be present at this interview.

Dor. Not at all. They must be alone.

Dam. I shall not say a word to him.

Dor. You deceive yourself: we know your usual outbursts; and that is just the way to spoil all. Go.

Dam. No; I will see, without getting angry.

Dor. How tiresome you are! Here he comes. Go away.

[*Damis hides himself in a closet at the farther end of the stage*].

SCENE II.

TARTUFFE, DORINE.[56]

Tar. [*The moment he perceives Dorine, he begins to speak loudly to his servant, who is behind*][57] Laurent, put away my hair shirt and my scourge, and pray that Heaven may ever enlighten you. If any one calls to see me, say that I have gone to the prisoners to distribute the alms which I have received.

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[55] This is the third time the audience has heard that Tartuffe loves Elmire, and Molière does this in order that the public should not afterwards be too suddenly horrified when the hypocrite is unmasked.

[56] See Appendix, Note F.

[57] The foul hero of the play only makes his appearance now, in the second scene of the third act. According to the *Lettre sur l' Imposteur* (see Introductory Notice, p. 111), this was done by Molière on purpose, because such a character could appear only when the action was in full force.

Dor. [*Aside*] What affectation and boasting!

Tar. What do you want?

Dor. To tell you . . .

Tar. [*Pulling a handkerchief from his pocket*] For Heaven's sake! before you go any farther, take this handkerchief, I pray.

Dor. For what?

Tar. Cover this bosom, which I cannot bear to see. The spirit is offended by such sights, and they evoke sinful thoughts.

Dor. You are, then, mighty susceptible to temptation; and the flesh seems to make a great impression on your senses! I cannot tell, of course, what heat inflames you: but my desires are not so easily aroused; and I could see you naked from top to toe, without being in the least tempted by the whole of your skin.

Tar. Be a little more modest in your expressions, or I shall leave you on the spot.

Dor. No, no, it is I who am going to leave you to yourself; and I have only two words to say to you. My mistress is coming down into this parlour, and wishes the favour of a minute's conversation with you.

Tar. Alas! with all my heart.

Dor. [*Aside*] How he softens down! Upon my word, I stick to what I have said of him.

Tar. Will she be long?

Dor. Methinks I hear her. Yes, it is herself, and I leave you together.

SCENE III.

ELMIRE, TARTUFFE.[58]

Tar. May Heaven, in its mighty goodness, for ever be-

[58] See Appendix, Note G.

stow upon you health both of soul and of body; and bless your days as much as the humblest of its votaries desires.

Elm. I am much obliged for this pious wish. But let us take a seat, to be more at ease.

Tar. [*Seated*] Are you quite recovered from your indisposition?

Elm. [*Seated*] Quite; this fever has soon left me.

Tar. My prayers are not deserving enough to have drawn this grace from above; but not one of them ascended to Heaven that had not your recovery for its object.

Elm. You are too anxious in your zeal for me.

Tar. We cannot cherish your dear health too much; and to re-establish yours, I would have given mine.

Elm. That is pushing Christian charity very far; and I feel much indebted to you for all this kindness.

Tar. I do much less for you than you deserve.

Elm. I wished to speak to you in private about a certain matter, and am glad that no one is here to observe us.

Tar. I am equally delighted; and no doubt, it is very pleasant to me, Madam, to find myself alone with you. I have often asked this opportunity from Heaven, but, till now, in vain.

Elm. What I wish is a few words with you, upon a small matter, in which you bare your heart and conceal nothing from me. [*Damis, without showing himself, half opens the door of the closet into which he had retired to listen to the conversation.*

Tar. And I will also, in return for this rare favour, unbosom myself entirely to you, and swear to you that the reports which I have spread about the visits which you receive in homage of your charms, do not spring from any hatred towards you, but rather from a passionate zeal which carries me away, and out of a pure motive . . .

Elm. That is how I take it. I think it is for my good that you trouble yourself so much.

Tar. [*Taking Elmire's hand and pressing her fingers*] Yes, Madam, no doubt; and my fervour is such . . .

Elm. Oh! you squeeze me too hard.

Tar. It is through excess of zeal. I never had any intention of hurting you, and would sooner. . . [*He places his hand on Elmire's knee.*

Elm. What does your hand there?

Tar. I am only feeling your dress: the stuff is very soft.

Elm. Oh! please leave off, I am very ticklish. [*Elmire pushes her chair back, and Tartuffe draws near with his.*

Tar. [*Handling the collar of Elmire*]. Bless me! how wonderful is the workmanship of this lace! They work in a miraculous manner now-a-days; never was anything so beautifully made.[59]

Elm. It is true. But let us have some talk about our affair. I have been told that my husband wishes to retract his promise, and give you his daughter. Is it true? Tell me.

Tar. He has hinted something to me; but to tell you the truth, Madam, that is not the happiness for which I am sighing: I behold elsewhere the marvellous attractions of that bliss which forms the height of my wishes.

Elm. That is because you have no love for earthly things.

Tar. My breast does not contain a heart of flint.

Elm. I believe that all your sighs tend towards Heaven, and that nothing here below rouses your desires.

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[59] Rabelais, in the sixteenth chapter of the second book of *Pantagruel*, says of Panurge: "When he came into the company of some good ladies, he would trifle them into a discourse of some fine workmanship of bone-lace, and then immediately put his hand into their bosom, asking them, 'And this work, is it of Flanders, or of Hainault?'"

Tar. The love which attaches us to eternal beauties does not stifle in us the love of earthly things; our senses may easily be charmed by the perfect works which Heaven has created. Its reflected loveliness shines forth in such as you; but in you alone it displays its choicest wonders. It has diffused on your face such beauty, that it dazzles the eyes and transports the heart; nor could I behold you, perfect creature, without admiring in you nature's author, and feeling my heart smitten with an ardent love for the most beautiful of portraits, wherein he has reproduced himself. At first I feared that this secret ardour might be nothing but a cunning snare of the foul fiend; and my heart even resolved to fly your presence, thinking that you might be an obstacle to my salvation. But at last I found, oh most lovely beauty, that my passion could not be blameable; that I could reconcile it with modesty; and this made me freely indulge it. It is, I confess, a great presumption in me to dare to offer you this heart; but I expect, in my affections, everything from your kindness, and nothing from the vain efforts of my own weakness. In you is my hope, my happiness, my peace; on you depends my torment or my bliss; and it is by your decision solely that I shall be happy if you wish it; or miserable, if it pleases you.

Elm. The declaration is exceedingly gallant; but it is, to speak truly, rather a little surprising. Methinks you ought to arm your heart better, and to reflect a little upon such a design. A pious man like you, and who is everywhere spoken of . . .

Tar. Ah! although I am a pious man, I am not the less a man;[60] and, when one beholds your heavenly charms,

[60] Some annotators of Molière pretend that he took this line from Corneille's tragedy, *Sertorius*, where we find, "And though I am a Roman, I am not the less a man." It is also found in the eighth tale of the third day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

the heart surrenders and reasons no longer. I know that such discourse from me must appear strange; but, after all, Madam, I am not an angel; and if my confession be condemned by you, you must blame your own attractions for it. As soon as I beheld their more than human loveliness, you became the queen of my soul. The ineffable sweetness of your divine glances broke down the resistance of my obstinate heart; it overcame everything—fastings, prayers, tears—and led all my desires to your charms. My looks and my sighs have told you so a thousand times; and, the better to explain myself, I now make use of words. If you should graciously contemplate the tribulations of your unworthy slave; if your kindness would console me, and will condescend to stoop to my insignificant self, I shall ever entertain for you, oh miracle of sweetness, an unexampled devotion. Your honour runs not the slightest risk with me, and need not fear the least disgrace on my part. All these court gallants, of whom women are so fond, are noisy in their doings and vain in their talk; they are incessantly pluming themselves on their successes, and they receive no favours which they do not divulge. Their indiscreet tongues, in which people confide, desecrate the altar on which their hearts sacrifice. But men of our stamp love discreetly, and with them a secret is always surely kept. The care which we take of our own reputation is a sufficient guarantee for the object of our love; and it is only with us, when they accept our hearts, that they find love without scandal, and pleasure without fear.[61]

Elm. I have listened to what you say, and your rhetoric explains itself in sufficiently strong terms to me. But are

[61] Boccaccio's *Féronde* uses some of Tartuffe's expressions in the tale mentioned in note 60. Regnier's *Macette* says also: "More discreet, they (the hypocrites) know, in loving, to give more satisfaction, though with less ostentation."

you not afraid that the fancy may take me to tell my husband of this gallant ardour; and that the prompt knowledge of such an amour might well change the friendship which he bears you?

Tar. I know that you are too gracious, and that you will pardon my boldness; that you will excuse, on the score of human frailty, the violent transports of a passion which offends you, and consider, by looking at yourself, that people are not blind, and men are made of flesh and blood.

Elm. Others would perhaps take it in a different fashion; but I shall show my discretion. I shall not tell the matter to my husband: but in return, I require something of you: that is, to forward, honestly and without quibbling, the union of Valère with Mariane, to renounce the unjust power which would enrich you with what belongs to another; and . . .

SCENE IV.

ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

Dam. [*Coming out of the closet in which he was hidden*] No, Madam, no; this shall be made public. I was in there when I overheard it all; and Providence seems to have conducted me thither to abash the pride of a wretch who wrongs me; to point me out a way to take vengeance on his hypocrisy and insolence; to undeceive my father, and to show him plainly the heart of a villain who talks to you of love.

Elm. No, Damis; it suffices that he reforms, and endeavours to deserve my indulgence. Since I have promised him, do not make me break my word. I have no wish to provoke a scandal; a woman laughs at such follies, and never troubles her husband's ears with them.

Dam. You have your reasons for acting in that way, and

I also have mine for behaving differently. It is a farce to wish to spare him; and the insolent pride of his bigotry has already triumphed too much over my just anger, and caused too much disorder amongst us. The scoundrel has governed my father too long, and plotted against my affections as well as Valère's. My father must be undeceived about this perfidious wretch; and Heaven offers me an easy means. I am indebted to it for this opportunity, and it is too favourable to be neglected. I should deserve to have it snatched away from me, did I not make use of it, now that I have it in hand.

Elm. Damis . . .

Dam. No, by your leave, I will use my own judgment. I am highly delighted; and all you can say will be in vain to make me forego the pleasure of revenge. I shall settle this affair without delay; and here is just the opportunity.

SCENE V.

ORGON, ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

Dam. We will enliven your arrival, father, with an altogether fresh incident, that will surprise you much. You are well repaid for all your caresses, and this gentleman rewards your tenderness handsomely. His great zeal for you has just shown itself; he aims at nothing less than at dishonouring you; and I have just surprised him making to your wife an insulting avowal of a guilty passion. Her sweet disposition, and her too discreet feelings would by all means have kept the secret from you; but I cannot encourage such insolence, and think that to have been silent about it would have been to do you an injury.

Elm. Yes, I am of opinion that we ought never to trouble a husband's peace with all those silly stories; that our honour does not depend upon that; and that it is enough

to defend ourselves. These are my senti-
would have said nothing, Damis, if I had
nce with you.

SCENE VI.

ORGON, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

hat have I heard ! Oh Heavens ! is it credible ?
s, brother, I am a wicked, guilty, wretched
of iniquity, the greatest villain that ever existed.
nent of my life is replete with pollutions ; it is
ss of crime and corruption ; and I see that Heaven,
se me, intends to mortify me on this occasion.
r great crime may be laid to my charge, I have
the wish nor the pride to deny it. Believe what
told, arm your anger, and drive me like a criminal
our house. Whatever shame you may heap upon me,
erve still more.

rg. [*To his Son*] What, wretch ! dare you, by this false-
l, tarnish the purity of his virtue ?

Dam. What, shall the pretended gentleness of this hypo-
e make you belie . . .

Org. Peace, cursed plague !

Tar. Ah ! let him speak ; you accuse him wrongly, and
ou had much better believe in his story. Why will you be so favourable to me after hearing such a fact ? Are you, after all, aware of what I am capable ? Why trust to my exterior, brother, and why, for all that is seen, believe me to be better than I am ? No, no, you allow yourself to be deceived by appearances, and I am, alas ! nothing less than what they think me. Everyone takes me to be a godly man, but the real truth is that I am very worthless. [*Addressing himself to Damis*] Yes, my dear child, say on ; call me a perfidious, infamous, lost wretch, a thief, a mur-

derer; load me with still more detestable
not contradict you, I have deserved them; a
on my knees to suffer ignominy, as a disgra
crimes of my life.[62]

Org. [*To Tartuffe*] This is too much, brot
Son] Does not your heart relent, wretch?

Dam. What! shall his words deceive you so

Org. Hold your tongue, you hangdog! [*R*
tuffe] Rise, brother, I beseech you. [*To his Son*
wretch!

Dam. He can . .

Org. Hold your tongue.

Dam. I burst with rage. What! I am look
as . . .

Org. Say another word, and I will break your b

Tar. In Heaven's name, brother, do not forget yo
I would rather suffer the greatest hardship, than th
should receive the slightest hurt for my sake.

Org. [*To his Son*] Ungrateful monster!

Tar. Leave him in peace. If I must on both kn
ask you to pardon him . . .

Org. [*Throwing himself on his knees also, and embr*
ing Tartuffe] Alas! are you in jest? [*To his Son*] Beho
his goodness, scoundrel!

Dam. Thus . . .

Org. Cease.

Dam. What! I . . .

Org. Peace, I tell you: I know too well the motive of your attack. You all hate him, and I now perceive wife, children, and servants all let loose against him. Every trick is impudently resorted to to remove this pious person from my house; but the more efforts they put forth to banish

[62] Compare this speech of Tartuffe with Montufar's, in Scarron's tale *The Hypocrites*, in the Introductory Notice to this play, page 99.

shall I employ to keep him here; and I shall
him my daughter, to abash the pride of my

you mean to compel her to accept him?
s, wretch! and, to enrage you, this very evening.
you all, and shall let you know that I am the
that I will be obeyed. Come, retract; throw
his feet immediately, you scoundrel, and ask his

What? I! at the feet of this rascal who, by his
s . . .
What, you resist, you beggar, and insult him be-
To Tartuffe] A cudgel! a cudgel! do not hold me
[*To his Son*] Out of my house, this minute, and
re to come back to it.
. Yes, I shall go; but . . .
. Quick, leave the place. I disinherit you, you
og, and give you my curse besides.

SCENE VII.

ORGON, TARTUFFE.

Org. To offend a saintly person in that way!
Tar. Forgive him, oh Heaven! the pang he causes me.[64]

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[63] Some actors, whilst playing the part of Tartuffe, do not move, whilst Orgon is shouting "do not hold me back." But Molière can never have intended to let the spectator suppose that Tartuffe wished Damis to be beaten. On the contrary, his pretended opposition to Orgon's passion heightens his influence; for an angry father, when his passion is abated, cannot take it amiss that a stranger prevents him from chastising his son.

[64] According to tradition,—a tradition supported by the actor Baron, a pupil of Molière,—this line was originally "Forgive him, O Heaven, as I forgive him;" but it was altered, because some people said it was a parody on a passage in the Lord's Prayer. See also, page 127, note 18.

[*To Orgon*] Could you but know my grief at
blackened in my brother's sight . . .

Org. Alas!

Tar. The very thought of this ingratitude
soul to that extent . . . The horror I conceiv
My heart is so oppressed that I cannot speak, a
it will be my death.

Org. [*Running, all in tears, towards the doo
his son has disappeared*] Scoundrel! I am sorr
has spared you, and not knocked you down on
[*To Tartuffe*] Compose yourself, brother, and do n

Tar. Let us put an end to these sad disputes.
ceive what troubles I cause in this house, and think
sary, brother, to leave it.

Org. What! you are jesting surely?

Tar. They hate me, and I find that they are t
make you suspect my integrity.

Org. What does it matter? Do you think that,
heart, I listen to them?

Tar. They will not fail to continue, you may be s
and these self-same stories which you now reject, m
perhaps, be listened to at another time.

Org. No, brother, never.

Tar. Ah, brother! a wife may easily impose upon a hu
band.

Org. No, no.

Tar. Allow me, by removing hence promptly, to depriv
them of all subject of attack.

Org. No, you shall remain; my life depends upon it.

Tar. Well! I must then mortify myself. If, however,
you would . . .

Org. Ah!

Tar. Be it so: let us say no more about it. But I know
how to manage in this. Honour is a tender thing, and

friendship enjoins me to prevent reports and causes for suspicion. I shall shun your wife, and you shall not see me . . .

Org. No, in spite of all, you shall frequently be with her. To annoy the world is my greatest delight; and I wish you to be seen with her at all times. Nor is this all: the better to defy them all, I will have no other heir but you, and I am going forthwith to execute a formal deed of gift of all my property to you. A faithful and honest friend, whom I take for son-in-law, is dearer to me than son, wife, and parents. Will you not accept what I propose?

Tar. The will of Heaven be done in all things.

Org. Poor fellow. Quick! let us get the draft drawn up: and then let envy itself burst with spite!

ACT IV. SCENE I.

CLÉANTE, TARTUFFE.

Clé. Yes, everyone talks about it, and you may believe me. The stir which this rumour makes is not at all to your credit; and I have just met you, Sir, opportunely, to tell you my opinion in two words. I will not sift these reports to the bottom; I refrain, and take the thing at its worst. Let us suppose that Damis has not acted well, and that you have been wrongly accused; would it not be like a Christian to pardon the offence, and to smother all desire of vengeance in your heart? And ought you, on account of a dispute with you, to allow a son to be driven from his father's home? I tell you once more, and candidly, that great and small are scandalized at it; and, if you will take my advice, you will try to make peace, and not push matters to extremes. Make a sacrifice to God of your resentment, and restore a son to his father's favour.

Tar. Alas! for my own part, I would do so with all my heart. I do not bear him, Sir, the slightest ill-will; I forgive him everything; I blame him for nothing; and would serve him to the best of my power. But Heaven's interest is opposed to it; and, if he comes back, I must leave the house. After his unparalleled behaviour, communication with him would give rise to scandal: Heaven knows what all the world would immediately think of it! They would impute it to sheer policy on my part; and they would say everywhere, that knowing myself to be guilty, I pretend a charitable zeal for my accuser; that I am afraid, and wish to conciliate him, in order to bribe him, in an underhand manner, into silence.

Clé. You try to put forward pretended excuses, and all your reasons, Sir, are too far-fetched. Why do you charge yourself with Heaven's interests? Has it any need of us to punish the guilty? Leave to it the care of its own vengeance; think only of the pardon which it enjoins for offences, and do not trouble yourself about men's judgments, when you are following the sovereign edicts of Heaven. What! shall the trivial regard for what men may think prevent the glory of a good action? No, no; let us always do what Heaven prescribes, and not trouble our heads with other cares.

Tar. I have already told you that from my heart I forgive him; and that, Sir, is doing what Heaven commands us to do: but after the scandal and the insult of to-day, Heaven does not require me to live with him.

Clé. And does it require you, Sir, to lend your ear to what a mere whim dictates to his father, and to accept the gift of a property to which in justice you have no claim whatever?

Tar. Those who know me will not think that this proceeds from self-interest. All the world's goods have but few charms for me; I am not dazzled by their deceptive glare: and should I determine to accept from his father that donation

which he wishes to make to me, it is only, in truth, because I fear that all that property might fall into wicked hands; lest it might be divided amongst those who would make a bad use of it in this world, and would not employ it, as I intend, for the glory of Heaven and the well-being of my fellow-men.

Clé. Oh, Sir, you need not entertain those delicate scruples, which may give cause for the rightful heir to complain. Allow him at his peril to enjoy his own, without troubling yourself in any way; and consider that it is better even that he should make a bad use of it, than that you should be accused of defrauding him of it. My only wonder is, that you could have received such a proposal unblushingly. For after all, has true piety any maxim showing how a legitimate heir may be stripped of his property? And if Heaven has put into your head an invincible obstacle to your living with Damis, would it not be better that as a prudent man you should make a civil retreat from this, than to allow that, contrary to all reason, the son should be turned out of the house for you. Believe me, Sir, this would be giving a proof of your probity . . .

Tar. Sir, it is half-past three: certain religious duties call me upstairs, and you will excuse my leaving you so soon.

Clé. [*Alone*] Ah!

SCENE II.

ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

Dor. [*To Cléante*] For Heaven's sake, Sir, bestir yourself with us for her: she is in mortal grief; and the marriage contract which her father has resolved upon being signed this evening, drives her every moment to despair. Here he comes! Pray let us unite our efforts, and try, by force

or art, to shake this unfortunate design that causes us all this trouble.

SCENE III.

ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

Org. Ah! I am glad to see you all assembled. [*To Mariane*] There is something in this document to please you, and you know already what it means.

Mar. [*At Orgon's feet*] Father, in the name of Heaven which knows my grief, and by all that can move your heart, relax somewhat of your paternal rights, and absolve me from obedience in this case. Do not compel me, by this harsh command, to reproach Heaven with my duty to you; and alas! do not make wretched the life which you have given me, father. If, contrary to the sweet expectations which I have formed, you forbid me to belong to him whom I have dared to love, kindly save me at least, I implore you on my knees, from the torment of belonging to one whom I abhor; and do not drive me to despair by exerting your full power over me.

Org. [*Somewhat moved*] Firm, my heart! none of this human weakness!

Mar. Your tenderness for him causes me no grief; indulge it to its full extent, give him your wealth, and if that be not enough, add mine to it; I consent to it with all my heart, and I leave you to dispose of it. But, at least, stop short of my own self; and allow me to end, in the austerities of a convent, the sad days which Heaven has allotted to me.

Org. Ah, that is it! When a father crosses a girl's love-sick inclinations, she wishes to become a nun. Get up. The more repugnance you feel in accepting him, the greater will be your merit. Mortify your senses by this marriage, and do not trouble me any longer.

Dor. But what . . .

Org. Hold your tongue. Meddle only with what concerns you. I flatly forbid you to say another word.

Clé. If you will permit me to answer you, and advise . . .

Org. Your advice is the best in the world, brother; it is well argued, and I set great store by it: but you must allow me not to avail myself of it.

Elm. [*To her husband*] I am at a loss what to say, after what I have seen; and I quite admire your blindness. You must be mightily bewitched and prepossessed in his favour, to deny to us the incidents of this day.

Org. I am your servant, and judge by appearances. I know your indulgence for my rascal of a son, and you were afraid of disowning the trick which he wished to play on the poor fellow. But, after all, you took it too quietly to be believed; and you ought to have appeared somewhat more upset.

Elm. Is our honour to bridle up so strongly at the simple avowal of an amorous transport, and can there be no reply to aught that touches it, without fury in our eyes and invectives in our mouth? As for me, I simply laugh at such talk; and the noise made about it by no means pleases me. I love to show my discreetness quietly, and am not at all like those savage prudes, whose honour is armed with claws and teeth, and who at the least word would scratch people's faces. Heaven preserve me from such good behaviour! I prefer a virtue that is not diabolical, and believe that a discreet and cold denial is no less effective in repelling a lover.

Org. In short, I know the whole affair, and will not be imposed upon.

Elm. Once more, I wonder at your strange weakness: but what would your unbelief answer if I were to show you that you had been told the truth.

Org. Show!

Elm. Aye.

Org. Stuff.

Elm. But if I found the means to show you plainly?

Org. Idle stories.

Elm. What a strange man! Answer me, at least. I am not speaking of believing us; but suppose that we fo a place where you could plainly see and hear everythi what would you say then of your good man?

Org. In that case, I should say that . . . I should nothing, for the thing cannot be.

Elm. Your delusion has lasted too long, and I have be too much taxed with imposture. I must, for my gratific tion, without going any farther, make you a witness of a that I have told you.

Org. Be it so. I take you at your word. We shal see your dexterity, and how you will make good thi promise.

Elm. [*To Dorine*] Bid him come to me.

Dor. [*To Elmire*] He is crafty, and it will be difficult perhaps, to catch him.

Elm. [*To Dorine*] No; people are easily duped by those whom they love, and conceit is apt to deceive itself. Bid him come down. [*To Cléante and Mariane*] And do you retire.

SCENE IV.

ELMIRE, ORGON.

Elm. Come, and get under this table.

Org. Why so?

Elm. It is necessary that you should conceal yourself well.

Org. But why under this table?

Elm. Good Heavens! do as you are told; I have thought

about my plan, and you shall judge. Get under there, I tell you, and, when you are there, take care not to be seen or heard.

Org. I confess that my complaisance is great: but I must needs see the end of your enterprise.

Elm. You will have nothing, I believe, to reply to me. [*To Orgon under the table*] Mind! I am going to meddle with a strange matter, do not be shocked in any way. I must be permitted to say what I like; and it is to convince you, as I have promised. Since I am compelled to it, I am going to make this hypocrite drop his mask by addressing soft speeches to him, flatter the shameless desires of his passion, and give him full scope for his audacity. As it is for your sake alone, and the better to confound him, that I pretend to yield to his wishes, I shall cease as soon as you show yourself, and things need not go farther than you wish. It is for you to stop his mad passion, when you think matters are carried far enough, to spare your wife, and not to expose me any more than is necessary to disabuse you. This is your business, it remains entirely with you, and [65] . . . But he comes. Keep close, and be careful not to show yourself.

SCENE V.

TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON [*under the table*]. [66]

Tar. I have been told that you wished to speak to me here.

Elm. Yes. Some secrets will be revealed to you. But

---

[65] These words of Elmire are, in reality, addressed to the audience, to remind them of the necessity of unmasking the hypocrite; they contain also an excuse for her farther behaviour; for, in spite of her modesty, she is compelled to give convincing proof to her husband that Tartuffe is a scoundrel.

[66] See Appendix, Note H.

close this door before they are told to you, and look about everywhere, for fear of a surprise. [*Tartuffe closes the door, and comes back*] We assuredly do not want here a scene like the one we just passed through: I never was so startled in my life. Damis put me in a terrible fright for you; and you saw, indeed, that I did my utmost to frustrate his intentions and calm his excitement. My confusion, it is true, was so great, that I had not a thought of contradicting him: but, thanks to Heaven, everything has turned out the better for that, and is upon a much surer footing. The esteem in which you are held has allayed the storm, and my husband will not take any umbrage at you. The better to brave people's ill-natured comments, he wishes us to be together at all times; and it is through this that, without fear of incurring blame, I can be closetted here alone with you; and this justifies me in opening to you my heart, a little too ready perhaps, to listen to your passion.

Tar. This language is somewhat difficult to understand, Madam; and you just now spoke in quite a different strain.

Elm. Ah! how little you know the heart of a woman, if such a refusal makes you angry! and how little you understand what it means to convey, when it defends itself so feebly! In those moments, our modesty always combats the tender sentiments with which we may be inspired.[67] Whatever reason we may find for the passion that subdues us, we always feel some shame in owning it. We deny it

[67] In the original French, there is a delicacy which can hardly be rendered into English. Elmire almost always avoids the use of a personal pronoun, but employs the indefinite *on*, during the whole of this scene. This may be grammatically wrong, but is, dramatically, eminently successful. We give, as an example, the following four lines in the original:—

"Quelque raison qu' on trouve à l'amour qui nous dompte,
On trouve à l'avouer toujours un peu de honte.
On s'en défend d' abord: mais de l'air qu' on s'y prend
On fait connaître assez que notre cœur se rend."

at first: but in such a way as to give you sufficiently to understand that our heart surrenders; that, for honour's sake, words oppose our wishes, and that such refusals promise everything. This is, no doubt, making a somewhat plain confession to you, and showing little regard for our modesty. But, since these words have at last escaped me, would I have been so anxious to restrain Damis, would I, pray, have so complacently listened, for such a long time, to the offer of your heart, would I have taken the matter as I have done, if the offer of that heart had had nothing in it to please me? And, when I myself would have compelled you to refuse the match that had just been proposed, what ought this entreaty to have given you to understand, but the interest I was disposed to take in you, and the vexation it would have caused me, that this marriage would have at least divided a heart that I wished all to myself?[68]

Tar. It is very sweet, no doubt, Madam, to hear these words from the lips we love; their honey plentifully diffuses a suavity throughout my senses, such as they never yet tasted. The happiness of pleasing you is my highest study, and my heart reposes all its bliss in your affection; but, by your leave, this heart presumes still to have some doubt in its own felicity. I may look upon these words as a decent stratagem to compel me to break off the match that is on the point of being concluded; and, if I must needs speak candidly to you, I shall not trust to such tender words,

[68] Here, again, there is a delicacy in the original French which cannot be rendered into English. Elmire is full of hesitation in what she is going to say, and she expresses this even in her grammar, which, although far from clear, beautifully reflects the trouble of her mind. We give the four last lines of her speech, crowded with *que*. I agree with Sainte-Beuve that Molière placed them there purposely.

"Qu'est-ce que cette instance a dû vous faire entendre,
Que l'intérêt qu'en vous on s'avise de prendre,
Et l'ennui qu'on aurait que ce noeud qu'on résout
Vînt partager du moins un cœur que l'on veut tout?"

until some of those favours, for which I sigh, have assured me of all which they intend to express, and fixed in my heart a firm belief of the charming kindness which you intend for me.

Elm. [*After having coughed to warn her husband*] What! would you proceed so fast, and exhaust the tenderness of one's heart at once? One takes the greatest pains to make you the sweetest declarations; meanwhile is not that enough for you? and will nothing content you, but pushing things to the utmost extremity?

Tar. The less a blessing is deserved, the less one presumes to expect it. Our love dares hardly rely upon words. A lot full of happiness is difficult to realise, and we wish to enjoy it before believing in it. As for me, who think myself so little deserving of your favours, I doubt the success of my boldness; and shall believe nothing, Madam, until you have convinced my passion by real proofs.

Elm. Good Heavens! how very tyrannically your love acts! And into what a strange confusion it throws me! What a fierce sway it exercises over our hearts! and how violently it clamours for what it desires! What! can I find no shelter from your pursuit? and will you scarcely give me time to breathe? Is it decent to be so very exacting, and to insist upon your demands being satisfied immediately; and thus, by your pressing efforts, to take advantage of the weakness which you see one has for you?

Tar. But if you look upon my addresses with a favourable eye, why refuse me convincing proofs?

Elm. But how can I comply with what you wish, without offending that Heaven of which you are always speaking?

Tar. If it be nothing but Heaven that opposes itself to my wishes, it is a trifle for me to remove such an obstacle; and that need be no restraint upon your love.

Elm. But they frighten us so much with the judgments of Heaven!

Tar. I can dispel these ridiculous fears for you, Madam, and I possess the art of allaying scruples. Heaven, it is true, forbids certain gratifications, but there are ways and means of compounding such matters.[69] According to our different wants, there is a science which loosens that which binds our conscience, and which rectifies the evil of the act with the purity of our intentions.[70] We shall be able to initiate you into these secrets, Madam; you have only to be led by me. Satisfy my desires, and have no fear; I shall be answerable for everything, and shall take the sin upon myself. [*Elmire coughs louder*] You cough very much, Madam?

Elm. Yes, I am much tormented.

Tar. Would you like a piece of this liquorice?

Elm. It is an obstinate cold, no doubt; and I know that all the liquorice in the world will do it no good.

Tar. That, certainly, is very sad.

Elm. Yes, more than I can say.

Tar. In short, your scruples, Madam, are easily overcome. You may be sure of the secret being kept, and there is no harm done unless the thing is bruited about. The scandal which it causes constitutes the offence, and sinning in secret is no sinning at all.

Elm. [*After having coughed once more*] In short, I

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[69] In the original edition there is a note saying, "It is a scoundrel who speaks."

[70] Pascal uses nearly the same words in the seventh *Provinciale*: "When we cannot prevent the action, we purify at least the intention; and thus we correct vice by means of the purity of the end." The Jansenists considered for some time the *Tartuffe* as a sequel to Pascal's Letters. Machiavelli, in the *Mandragore*, makes Friar Timotheo use the same arguments in order to persuade a married woman to procure an heir to her husband.

see that I must make up my mind to yield; that I must consent to grant you everything; and that with less than that, I ought not to pretend to satisfy you, or to be believed (?) It is no doubt very hard to go to that length, and it is greatly in spite of myself that I venture thus far; but, since people persist in driving me to this; since they will not credit aught I may say, and wish for more convincing proofs, I can but resolve to act thus, and satisfy them.[71] If this gratification offends, so much the worse for those who force me to it; the fault ought surely not to be mine.

Tar. Yes, Madam, I take it upon myself; and the thing in itself . . .

Elm. Open this door a little, and, see, pray, if my husband be not in that gallery.

Tar. What need is there to take so much thought about him? Between ourselves, he is easily led by the nose. He is likely to glory in all our interviews, and I have brought him so far that he will see everything, and without believing anything.

Elm. It matters not. Go, pray, for a moment and look carefully everywhere outside.

SCENE VI.

ORGON, ELMIRE.

Org. [*Coming from under the table*] This is, I admit to you, an abominable wretch! I cannot recover myself, and all this perfectly stuns me.

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[71] See page 184, note 67. Elmire, of course, uses *on* here to designate Orgon, though Tartuffe takes it for himself. If she had not used this indefinite pronoun from the very beginning, the hypocrite's suspicions might have been roused. We give the four last lines in the original:—

"Mais, puisque l'on s'obstine à m'y vouloir réduire,
Puisqu'on ne veut point croire à tout ce qu'on peut dire,
Et qu'on veut des témoins qui soient plus convaincants,
Il faut bien s'y résoudre, et contenter les gens."

Elm. What, you come out so soon! You are surely jesting. Get under the table-cloth again; it is not time yet. Stay to the end, to be quite sure of the thing, and do not trust at all to mere conjectures.

Org. No, nothing more wicked ever came out of hell.

Elm. Good Heavens! you ought not to believe things so lightly. Be fully convinced before you give in; and do not hurry for fear of being mistaken.[72]

[*Elmire pushes Orgon behind her.*

SCENE VII.

TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON.

Tar. [*Without seeing Orgon*] Everything conspires, Madam, to my satisfaction. I have surveyed the whole apartment; there is no one there; and my delighted soul . . . [*At the moment that Tartuffe advances with open arms to embrace Elmire, she draws back, and Tartuffe perceives Orgon.*

Org. [*Stopping Tartuffe*] Gently! you are too eager in your amorous transports, and you ought not to be so impetuous. Ha! ha! good man, you wished to victimize me! How you are led away by temptations! You would marry my daughter, and covet my wife! I have been a long while in doubt whether you were in earnest, and I always expected you would change your tone; but this is pushing the proof far enough: I am satisfied, and wish for no more.

Elm. [*To Tartuffe*] It is much against my inclinations that I have done this: but I have been driven to the necessity of treating you thus.

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[72] Elmire does not joke with Orgon, but is really angry that she has been obliged to do violence to her innate modesty, in order to convince him.

Tar. [*To Orgon*] What! do you believe . . .

Org. Come, pray, no more. Decamp, and without ceremony.

Tar. My design[73] . . .

Org. These speeches are no longer of any use; you must get out of this house, and forthwith.

Tar. It is for you to get out, you who assume the mastership: the house belongs to me, I will make you know it, and show you plainly enough that it is useless to resort to these cowardly tricks to pick a quarrel with me; that one cannot safely, as one thinks, insult me; that I have the means of confounding and of punishing imposture, of avenging offended Heaven, and of making those repent who talk of turning me out hence.[74]

SCENE VIII.

ELMIRE, ORGON.

Elm. What language is this? and what does he mean?

Org. I am, in truth, all confusion, and this is no laughing matter.

Elm. How so?

Org. I perceive my mistake by what he says; and the deed of gift troubles my mind.

Elm. The deed of gift!

Org. Yes. The thing is done. But something else disturbs me too.

Elm. And what?

Org. You shall know all. But first let us go and see if a certain box is still upstairs.

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[73] Tartuffe, no doubt, was going to say, "My design was to put to the proof the virtue of your wife." The often-mentioned *Lettre sur l' Imposteur* says that Tartuffe here calls Orgon his brother, and begins to justify himself. Molière most probably modified this passage.

[74] See Appendix, Note I.

ACT V. SCENE I.

ORGON, CLÉANTE.

Clé. Where would you run to?

Org. Indeed! how can I tell?

Clé. It seems to me that we should begin by consulting together what had best be done in this emergency.

Org. This box troubles me sorely. It makes me despair more than all the rest.

Clé. This box then contains an important secret?

Org. It is a deposit that Argas himself, the friend whom I pity, entrusted secretly to my own hands. He selected me for this in his flight; and from what he told me, it contains documents upon which his life and fortune depend.

Clé. Why then did you confide it into other hands?

Org. It was from a conscientious motive. I straightway confided the secret to the wretch; and his arguing persuaded me to give this box into his keeping, so that, in case of any inquiry, I might be able to deny it by a ready subterfuge, by which my conscience might have full absolution for swearing against the truth.[75]

Clé. This is critical, at least, to judge from appearances; And the deed of gift, and this confidence, have been, to tell you my mind, steps too inconsiderately taken. You may be driven far with such pledges; and since the fellow has these advantages over you, it is a great imprudence on your part to drive him to extremities; and you ought to seek some gentler method.

Org. What! to hide such a double-dealing heart, so wicked a soul, under so fair an appearance of touching fervour! And I who received him in my house a beggar

[75] Tartuffe has taught Orgon the doctrine of "mental reservation," just as he wished to teach Elmire that of "purity of intention." Pascal attacks those casuistical subtleties in the ninth *Provinciale*.

and penniless. . . . It is all over; I renounce all pious people. Henceforth I shall hold them in utter abhorrence, and be worse to them than the very devil.

Clé. Just so! you exaggerate again! You never preserve moderation in anything. You never keep within reason's bounds; and always rush from one extreme to another. You see your mistake, and find out that you have been imposed upon by a pretended zeal. But is there any reason why, in order to correct yourself, you should fall into a greater error still, and say that all pious people have the same feelings as that perfidious rascal? What! because a scoundrel has audaciously deceived you, under the pompous show of outward austerity, will you needs have it that every one is like him, and that there is no really pious man to be found now-a-days? Leave those foolish deductions to free-thinkers:[76] distinguish between real virtue and its counterfeit; never bestow your esteem too hastily, and keep in this the necessary middle course. Beware, if possible, of honouring imposture; but do not attack true piety also; and if you must fall into an extreme, rather offend again on the other side.

SCENE II.

ORGON, CLÉANTE, DAMIS.

Dam. What! father, is it true that this scoundrel threatens you? that he forgets all that you have done for him, and that his cowardly and too contemptible pride turns your kindness for him against yourself?

Org. Even so, my son; and it causes me unutterable grief.

Dam. Leave him to me, I will slice his ears off. Such insolence must not be tolerated: it is my duty to

[76] See page 144, note 41.

deliver you from him at once; and, to put an end to this matter, I must knock him down.

Clé. Spoken just like a regular youth. Moderate, if you please, these violent transports. We live under a government, and in an age, in which violence only makes matters worse.

SCENE III.

MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, DAMIS, DORINE.

Mad. P. What is all this? What dreadful things do I hear!

Org. Some novelties which my own eyes have witnessed, and you see how I am repaid for my kindness. I affectionately harbour a fellow creature in his misery, I shelter him and treat him as my own brother; I heap favours upon him every day; I give him my daughter, and everything I possess: and, at that very moment, the perfidious, infamous wretch forms the wicked design of seducing my wife; and, not content even with these vile attempts, he dares to threaten me with my own favours; and, to encompass my ruin, wishes to take advantage of my indiscreet good nature, drive me from my property which I have transferred to him, and reduce me to that condition from which I rescued him!

Dor. Poor fellow!

Mad. P. I can never believe, my son, that he would commit so black a deed.

Org. What do you mean?

Mad. P. Good people are always envied.

Org. What do you mean by all this talk, mother?

Mad. P. That there are strange goings-on in your house, and that we know but too well the hatred they bear him.

Org. What has this hatred to do with what I have told you?

Mad. P. I have told you a hundred times, when a boy,

"That virtue here is persecuted ever;
That envious men may die, but envy never."

Org. But in what way does this bear upon to-day's doings?

Mad. P. They may have concocted a hundred idle stories against him.

Org. I have already told you that I have seen everything myself.

Mad. P. The malice of slanderers is very great.

Org. You will make me swear, mother. I tell you that with my own eyes I have witnessed this daring crime.

Mad. P. Evil tongues have always venom to scatter abroad, and nothing here below can guard against it.

Org. That is a very senseless remark. I have seen it, I say, seen with my own eyes, seen, what you call seen. Am I to din it a hundred times in your ears, and shout like four people?

Mad. P. Goodness me! appearances most frequently deceive: you must not always judge by what you see.

Org. I am boiling with rage!

Mad. P. Human nature is liable to false suspicions, and good is often construed into evil.

Org. I must construe the desire to embrace my wife into a charitable design!

Mad. P. It is necessary to have good reasons for accusing people; and you ought to have waited until you were quite certain of the thing.

Org. How the deuce could I be more certain? Ought I to have waited, mother, until to my very eyes, he had . . . You will make me say some foolish thing.

Mad. P. In short, his soul is too full of pure zeal; and I

cannot at all conceive that he would have attempted the things laid to his charge.

Org. Go, my passion is so great that, if you were not my mother, I do not know what I might say to you.

Dor. [*To Orgon*] A just reward of things here below, Sir: you would not believe anyone, and now they will not believe you.

Clé. We are wasting in mere trifling, the time that should be employed in devising some measures. We must not remain inactive when a knave threatens.

Dam. What! would his effrontery go to that extent?

Elm. As for me, I hardly think it possible, and his ingratitude here shows itself too plainly.

Clé. [*To Orgon*] Do not trust to that; he will find some means to justify his doings against you; and for less than this, a powerful party[77] has involved people in a vexatious maze. I tell you once more, that, armed with what he has, you should never have pushed him thus far.

Org. True enough; but what could I do? I was unable to master my resentment at the presumption of the wretch.

Clé. I wish, with all my heart, that we could patch up even a shadow of peace, between you two.

Elm. Had I but known how he was armed against us, I would have avoided bringing things to such a crisis; and my . . .

Org. [*To Dorine, seeing M. Loyal come in*] What does this man want? Go and see quickly. I am in a fine state for people to come to see me!

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[77] The original has *cabale*. See Vol. III., page 162, note 37.

SCENE IV.

ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, MR. LOYAL.

M. Loy. [*To Dorine at the farther part of the stage*] Good morning, dear sister;[78] pray, let me speak to your master.

Dor. He is engaged; and I doubt whether he can see anyone at present.

M. Loy. I do not intend to be intrusive in his own house. I believe that my visit will have nothing to displease him. I have come upon a matter of which he will be very glad.

Dor. Your name?

M. Loy. Only tell him that I come from Monsieur Tartuffe, for his good.

Dor. [*To Orgon*] This is a man who comes, in a gentle way, from Monsieur Tartuffe, upon some business, of which, he says, you will be very glad.

Clé. [*To Orgon*] You must see who this man is, and what he wants.

Org. [*To Cleante*] Perhaps he comes to reconcile us: How shall I receive him?

Clé. You must not allow your anger to get the upper hand, and if he speaks of an arrangement, you should listen to him.

M. Loy. [*To Orgon*] Your servant, Sir! May Heaven punish those who would harm you, and may it favour you as much as I wish!

Org. [*Softly to Cléante*] This mild beginning confirms my opinion, and augurs already some reconciliation.

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[78] M. Loyal, in employing the words "dear sister," shows at once that he is worthy of being employed by Tartuffe.

M. Loy. Your whole family has always been dear to me, and I served your father.

Org. I am ashamed, Sir, and crave your pardon for not knowing you or your name.

M. Loy. My name is Loyal, a native of Normandy,[79] and I am a tipstaff to the court in spite of envy.[80] For the last forty years, I have had the happiness, thanking Heaven, of exercising the functions thereof with much honour; and I have come, with your leave, Sir, to serve you with a writ of a certain decree . . .

Org. What! you are here . . .

M. Loy. Let us proceed without anger, Sir. It is nothing but a summons; a notice to quit this house, you and yours, to remove your chattels, and to make room for others, without delay or remissness, as required hereby.

Org. I! leave this house!

M. Loy. Yes, Sir, if you please. The house at present, as you well know, belongs incontestably to good Monsieur Tartuffe. Of all your property, he is henceforth lord and master, by virtue of a contract of which I am the bearer. It is in due form, and nothing can be said against it.

Dam. [*To M. Loyal*] Certainly this impudence is immense, and I admire it!

M. Loy. [*To Damis*] Sir, my business lies not with you; [*Pointing to Orgon*] it is with this gentleman. He is both reasonable and mild, and knows too well the duty of an honest man to oppose the law in any way.

Org. But . . .

M. Loy. Yes, Sir, I know that you would not rebel for

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[79] The Normans had the reputation of being very cautious (*avisé*)—the Scotch express it by pawky—and also of being very fond of going to law; hence the allusion. The original has *huissier à verge*.

[80] See page 131, note 24.

a million of money, and that, like a gentleman, you will allow me to execute here the orders which I have received.

Dam. Mr Tipstaff, you may chance to get your black gown well dusted here.

M. Loy. [*To Orgon*] Order your son to hold his tongue or to retire, Sir. I should be very loth to have recourse to writing, and to see your name figure in my official report.

Dor. [*Aside*] This Mr Loyal has a very disloyal air.

M. Loy. Having a great deal of sympathy with all honest people, I charged myself with these documents, Sir, as much to oblige and please you, as to avoid the choice of those who, not having the same consideration for you that inspires me, might have proceeded in a less gentle way.

Org. And what can be worse than to order people to quit their own house?

M. Loy. You are allowed time, and I shall suspend until to-morrow the execution of the writ, Sir. I shall come only to pass the night here with ten of my people without noise or without scandal. For form's sake, you must, if you please, before going to bed, bring me the keys of your door. I shall take care not to disturb your rest, and to permit nothing which is not right. But to-morrow, you must be ready in the morning, to clear the house of even the smallest utensil; my people shall assist you, and I have selected strong ones, so that they can help you to remove everything. One cannot act better than I do, I think; and as I am treating you with great indulgence, I entreat you also, Sir, to profit by it, so that I may not be annoyed in the execution of my duty.

Org. [*Aside*] I would willingly give just now the best hundred gold pieces of what remains to me for the pleasure of striking on this snout the soundest blow that ever was dealt.

Clé. [*Softly to Orgon*] Leave well alone. Do not let us make things worse.

Dam. I can hardly restrain myself at this strange impertinence, and my fingers are itching.

Dor. Upon my word, Mr Loyal, with such a broad back, a few cudgel blows would do you no harm.

M. Loy. We might easily punish these infamous words, sweetheart; and there is a law against women too.

Clé. [*To Monsieur Loyal*] Pray, let us put an end to all this, Sir. Hand over this paper quickly, and leave us.

M. Loy. Till by-and-by. May Heaven bless you all!

Org. And may it confound you, and him who sends you!

SCENE V.

ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, DAMIS, DORINE.

Org. Well! mother, do you see now whether I am right; and you may judge of the rest from the writ. Do you at last perceive his treacheries?

Mad. P. I stand aghast, and feel as if dropped from the clouds!

Dor. [*To Orgon*] You are wrong to complain, you are wrong to blame him, and his pious designs are confirmed by this. His virtue is perfected in the love for his neighbour. He knows that worldly goods often corrupt people, and he wishes, from pure charity, to take everything away from you which might become an obstacle to your salvation.

Org. Hold your tongue. I must always be saying that to you.

Clé. [*To Orgon*] Let us consult what had best be done.

Elm. Go and expose the audacity of the ungrateful wretch. This proceeding destroys the validity of the contract; and his treachery will appear too black to allow him to meet with the success which we surmise.

SCENE VI.

VALÈRE, ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, DAMIS, DORINE.

Val. It is with great regret, Sir, that I come to afflict you; but I see myself compelled to it by pressing danger. A most intimate and faithful friend, who knows the interest which I take in you, has, for my sake, by a most hazardous step, violated the secrecy due to the affairs of the State, and has just sent me an intimation, in consequence of which you will be obliged to flee immediately. The scoundrel who has long imposed upon you, has an hour since accused you to the King, and amongst other charges which he brings against you, has lodged in his hands important documents of a state-criminal, of which, he says, contrary to the duty of a subject, you have kept the guilty secret. I am ignorant of the details of the crime laid to your charge; but a warrant is out against you; and the better to execute it, he himself is to accompany the person who is to arrest you.

Clé. These are his armed rights; and by this the traitor seeks to make himself master of your property.

Org. The man is, I own to you, a wicked brute!

Val. The least delay may be fatal to you. I have my coach at the door to carry you off, with a thousand louis which I bring you. Let us lose no time; the blow is terrible, and is one of those which are best parried by flight. I offer myself to conduct you to a place of safety, and will accompany you to the end of your flight.

Org. Alas, what do I not owe to your obliging cares! I must await another opportunity to thank you; and I implore Heaven to be propitious enough to enable me one day to acknowledge this generous service. Farewell: be careful, the rest of you . . .

Clé. Go quickly. We will endeavour, brother, to do what is necessary.

SCENE VII.

TARTUFFE, A POLICE OFFICER, MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, DORINE.

Tar. [*Stopping Orgon*] Gently, Sir, gently, do not run so fast. You will not have to go far to find a lodging; we take you a prisoner in the King's name.

Org. Wretch! you have reserved this blow for the last: this is the stroke, villain, by which you despatch me; and which crowns all your perfidies.

Tar. Your abuse cannot incense me; Heaven has taught me to suffer everything.

Clé. Your moderation is great, I confess.

Dam. How impudently the villain sports with Heaven!

Tar. All your outrages cannot move me in the least; and I think of nothing but my duty.

Mar. You may glorify yourself very much upon this; and this task is very honourable for you to undertake.

Tar. A task cannot but be glorious when it proceeds from the power that sends me hither.

Org. But do you remember, ungrateful wretch; that my charitable hand raised you from a miserable condition?

Tar. Yes, I know what help I received from you; but the King's interest is my first duty. The just obligation of this sacred duty stifles all gratitude in my heart; and to such a powerful consideration, I would sacrifice friend, wife, kindred, and myself with them.

Elm. The hypocrite!

Dor. How artfully he makes himself a lovely cloak of all that is sacred.

Clé. But if this zeal, which guides you, and upon which you plume yourself so much, be so perfect as you say, why has it not shown itself until Orgon caught you trying to seduce his wife; and why did you not think of denouncing

him until his honour obliged him to drive you from his house? I do not say that the gift of all his property, which he has made over to you, ought to have turned you from your duty; but why, wishing to treat him as a criminal to-day, did you consent to take aught from him?

Tar. [*To the Officer*] Pray, Sir, deliver me from this clamour, and be good enough to execute your orders.

Offi. Yes, we have no doubt, delayed too long to discharge them; your words remind me of this just in time; and to execute them, follow me directly to the prison which is destined for your abode.[81]

Tar. Who? I, Sir?

Offi. Yes, you.

Tar. Why to prison?

Offi. I have no account to give to you [*To Orgon*] Compose yourself, Sir, after so great an alarm. We live under a monarch, an enemy to fraud, a monarch whose eyes penetrate into the heart, and whom all the art of impostors cannot deceive. Blessed with great discernment, his lofty soul looks clearly at things; it is never betrayed by exaggeration, and his sound reason falls into no excess. He bestows lasting glory on men of worth; but he shows this zeal without blindness, and his love for sincerity does not close his heart to the horror which falsehood must inspire.[82] Even this person could not hoodwink him, and he has guarded himself against more artful snares. He soon perceived, by his subtle penetration, all the vileness concealed in his

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[81] This is a just counterpart of the *deus ex machina* of Tartuffe, when he says, in the seventh scene of the fourth act, to Orgon, "It is for you to get out, you who assume the mastership: the house belongs to me I will make you know it."

[82] This praise was not wholly undeserved in 1669; although there seems to me rather too much of it. When *Tartuffe* was played during the first French Revolution, these lines were altered to suit the times, and, of course, the praise of the King was omitted.

inmost heart. In coming to accuse you, he has betrayed himself, and, by a just stroke of supreme justice, discovered himself to the King as a notorious rogue, against whom information had been laid under another name. His life is a long series of wicked actions, of which whole volumes might be written. Our monarch, in short, has detested his vile ingratitude and disloyalty towards you; has joined this affair to his other misdeeds, and has placed me under his orders, only to see his impertinence carried out to the end, and to make him by himself give you satisfaction for everything. Yes, he wishes me to strip the wretch of all your documents which he professes to possess, and to give them into your hands. By his sovereign power he annuls the obligations of the contract which gave him all your property, and lastly, pardons you this secret offence, in which the flight of a friend has involved you; and it is the reward of your former zeal in upholding his rights, to show that he knows how to recompense a good action when least thought of; that merit never loses aught with him; and that he remembers good much better than evil.[83]

Dor. Heaven be praised!

Mad. P. I breathe again.

Elm. Favourable success!

Mar. Who dared foretell this?

Org. [*To Tartuffe, whom the officer leads off*] We wretch, there you are . . .

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[83] The analysis of the officer's speech given in the so-often-quot *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* proves that it was different from what it now In speaking of Louis XIV., he says that "the prince had seen into t heart of the wretch, by an intuition, which monarchs possess above other men, that calumny is abashed by his mere presence," and that h dislikes hypocrisy as much as it has influence over his subjects. Al these remarks are not to be found in the officer's speech as we now possess it.

SCENE VIII.

MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, DORINE.

Clé. Ah! brother, stop; and do not descend to indignities. Leave the wretch to his fate, and do not add to the remorse that overwhelms him. Rather wish that his heart, from this day, may be converted to virtue; that he may reform his life, in detesting his vice, and soften the justice of our great prince; while you throw yourself at his knees to render thanks for his goodness, which has treated you so leniently.

Org. Yes, it is well said. Let us throw ourselves joyfully at his feet, to laud the kindness which his heart displays to us. Then, having acquitted ourselves of this first duty, we must apply ourselves to the just cares of another, and by a sweet union crown in Valère the flame of a generous and sincere lover.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 133.

Medbourne, in his *Tartuffe* (Act i., Scene 1), imitates, nearly literally the same scene from the same play of Molière.

PERNELLE, FLIPOTE, ELMIRA, MARIANA, DORINA, DAMIS, CLEANTHES.

Per. Come, Flipote, let 's begone that we may 'scape 'em.
El. You walk at such a rate we can't o'ertake you.
Per. Then prithee Daughter leave me, go no further:
These idle Complements I have no need of.
El. We must discharge that Duty which we owe you,
Pray Mother what 's the Cause you leave us thus?
Per. I can't behold your Manage of Affairs.
You have no due Regard nor Care of me;
Therefore I leave your House ill satisfy'd,
For every Word I speak is contradicted.
You shew me no Respect, but in Confusion,
All talk at once, your House is *Dover*-Court.
Dor. If——
Per. Friend you 're a Waiting-woman, hold your Peace,
Good Mistress Nimble-chaps; you 're very saucy
To be thus peremptory 'mongst your Betters.
Da. But——
Per. But you 're a Sot, take that from me in short;
'Tis I that say it who am your Grandmother,
And I have told your Father a Hundred times,
That I foresaw your wicked Inclinations;
And that you 'd prove at last his real Torment.
Mar. I believe——
Per. You are his Sister, and wou'd seem discreet.
I touch'd not you, whilst that I found you silent:
But now I see you verifie the Proverb,
The silent Waters are most dangerous,
Still Sows eat all the Draught. I hate your Manners.
[illegible]y Mother hear——
[illegible]hter be not offended;
[illegible]your Conduct in each Action bad,
[illegible]ght to have been th' Example to 'em all,
[illegible]their good deceased Mother was.

Come, y'are a spendthrift, your gawdy Dress afflicts me,
Those who intend to please their Husbands only,
Will find they have no need of half those Gugaws.

Cle. But, Madam, after all——

Per. Good Sir, her Brother,
I much esteem you, love you, and respect you,
But truly, Sir, were I as my Son's Wife,
I would entreat you to come here no more.
You preach such Rules and Maxims to their Life,
Since they are such, as honest Men abhor.
Sir, I am plain with you, and speak my Mind.

Da. Mr Tartuffe is happy without doubt.

Per. He is an honest Man, wou'd you were like him;
And I can scarce contain my Passion when
I hear him Censur'd by such Fools as you.

Da. Shall such an *Ignis fatuus* as he
Domineer over us in my Father's House,
So that we cannot take any Diversion,
But what his canting Worship first approves?

Dor. If we should hear his Maxims, and believe 'em
The zealous Critick would in all controul us.

Per. What he controuls I'm sure is well design'd;
'Tis the true way to Heaven that he would lead you:
Therefore you ought to reverence and observe him.

Da. All that my Father, or your self can urge,
Can ne'er oblige me, (but) to think well of him;
I should bely my Heart should I say otherwise:
After his Mode I could behave my self,
And I foresee th' Event, that with this Zealot
I should obtain a reverend Esteem.

Dor. Yes, yes, no doubt; but yet to us 't is scandalous,
For one unknown to make himself our Patron:
A Beggar, who at first came without Shoes,
And all his Clothes were hardly worth a Groat,
To contradict us and to play the Master.

Per. Ah mercy; O my Life! it would be better
If all were governed by his pious Rules.

Dor. He passes for a Saint in your esteem,
But you will find he is all Hypocrite.

Per. Why, there's a Tongue.

Dor. I would not trust myself but on good Warrant,
Further with him than with his Servant Laurence:
And he I'm sure is Flesh and Blood.

Per. I'm ignorant what Heart the Servant has,
But I dare justify the Master's Truth:
You wou'd not wish him ill, nor yet revile him

But that he tells you of your Faults so plainly:
'T is against Sin his Heart is so provok'd,
And the Interest of Heaven that prompts him to't.

Der. But what's the Cause that over-nice of late,
He will not suffer any to frequent us?
In what do harmless Visits offend Heaven?
Shall I expound this Riddle freely to you?
Faith, Madam, I believe, he is Jealous of you.

Per. Let not your Tongue out-run your Wit, take Heed;
It is not only he that blames these Visits;
But 't is the Train of those that haunt your House,
The many Coaches planted at your Gate.
The rude Rencounter of so many Lacqueys,
These, these make such a Noise among your Neighbours
That I believe at last nothing shall pass
They will not talk of; thus you pawn your Credit.

Cl. Ah, Madam, would you hinder a Man from Talking?
That would be burthensome to humane Life.
If we should shun those you think idle Toys,
We must renounce our dearest Friends sometimes:
And though we should make full resolve to do it,
Think you, you could impose a general Silence?
There is no Bulwark, Madam, 'gainst Detraction.
The best Way is to slight all sottish Talkers;
And while we strive to live in Innocence,
Let Libertines their Humours entertain,

El. Our Cousin Daphne, and her little Husband,
Perhaps may take a Liberty of Speech;
And 't is too often seen whose Actions merit
The most severe Reproof, soonest detract:
They lie upon the catch, ready to seize,
And lay fast hold on every little Error,
That by Misprision others guilty make,
And spread the News abroad with an odd Joy
At their Miscarriage; painted with false Colours,
They think to put a Cheat upon the World;
And under the feigned Mask of a Resemblance
To some Intrigues of Vertue, start a Zeal
Fit to disguise that Envy which has forg'd
A Charge of Slander against the fair Repute
Of some they make a fair Pretence unto;
[illegible]to make 'em Partners in their Crimes.
[illegible]Discourse is little to our Business:
[illegible]wn Oranta leads a holy Life,
[illegible] is all for Heaven; and I have heard
[illegible]h she has condemn'd the Train frequents you.

Dor. The Example's wonderful, the Lady good;
But yet her Life 's a little too severe;
Thank Heav'n for that, 't is Age has given her Soul
This ardent Zeal; for in her youthful Days
She was expert in keeping of her Body.
Attracting the Homages of many Hearts!
She knew to shew her Skill in several Shapes;
And did enjoy her fair Advantages;
But finding that the Sparkles of her Eyes
Now downward fall, she would renounce the World,
Envying any should enjoy those Pleasures
Which Age denies 'em, through their weak Performance.
Per. 'Tis well; these idle Stories please your Ears,
And that 's the Reason I desert your House;
My Son did never yet a wiser Thing,
Than when he entertain'd this pious Man,
Whom for your Benefit you ought to imitate.
[*The old woman Coughs.*
Dor. Would you two Saints were bound to live together;
Per. 'T would be no little Comfort to our Family. [*Aside.*
Your Balls, your Masks, your complemental Visits,
Are all the Inventions of some Evil Spirit,
Where one can never hear a pious Word;
They 're foolish, idle, sinful Songs and Tales,
At which our Neighbour oft is scandaliz'd,
As a good Brother said the other Day,
Truly it is the Tower of Babylon,
Where giddy-brain'd Phantasticks waste their Time.
But to the Point. [*Flipote laughs at Pernelle. She sees it.*
Look, I beseech you, there 's one sneers already.
Oh how my spirit boils! I say no more,
For now I 'm hindred to declare my Thoughts.
O! Impudence. [*Flipote laughs again.*
Take that, bold Gossip, and learn to mend your Manners.
[*Madame Pernelle pushes her before her.*
Go on, you Baggage, go!

B, Page 141.

Medbourne has literally imitated, in *Tartuffe* (Act i., Scene 4), the Scene of the first Act of Molière's play of the same name.

ORGON, CLEANTHES, DORINA.

Org. Oh Brother! a Good Morrow.
Clean. I was just going, Brother; y 'are welcome Ho
What, looks the Cou try pleasant yet or no?

Org. Dorina (Brother, let me entreat your Stay,
Permit me a little to take off my Care,
In being satisfy'd how we all do)
Have all things happen'd well these two Days past?
How have you spent your Time! are you all well?
Dor. My Mistress th' other Day was very sick
O' th' Feaver, and the Head-ach; Cruel Pains.
Org. But how fares Tartuffe?
Dor. Tartuffe; wondrous well.
He's fresh and fair, always a good Stomach.
Org. Alas! Poor Man!
Dor. At Night she was indispos'd
And did not touch one Bit at Supper, Sir,
Alas! you know the Head-ach's a sad Pain.
Org. But how did Tartuffe?
Dor. He supp'd, Sir, by himself,
And most devoutly eat up two Partridges,
After a Hash of half a Leg of Mutton.
Org. Alas! poor Man!
Dor. But my poor Mistress, Sir, was so afflicted
She could not take a Moment's Rest all Night:
The violent Heat o' th' Feaver kept her waking,
We sat up with her till 'twas almost Day.
Org. And how did my poor Tartuffe then all Night?
Dor. As soon as he had Supp'd he fell Asleep
And from the Table he went strait to Bed,
Where without Trouble on a good Feather-bed
He took the Pains to sleep till the next Day.
Org. Ah! poor Man!
Dor. At last, Sir, when our Reasons had prevail'd,
She did resolve she'd venture to be Blooded,
And upon that she presently found Ease.
Org. And what became of Tartuffe all this while?
Dor. Alas, Sir, he like a Courageous Man,
To fortify his Soul against all Danger,
And to repair the Blood my Mistress lost,
Drank to his Breakfast four great Bowls of Wine.
Org. Alas! poor Man!
Dor. Sir, to be short they both are very well,
And I am going now to tell my Mistress,
The Joy that you express for his good Health.

C, Page 147.

Cibber, in *The Non-Juror*, (Act i., Scene 1) has imitated and paraphrased the sixth Scene of the first Act of Molière's *Tartuffe;* but Orgon is called Sir John Woodvil, and Cléante becomes his son, Colonel Woodvil.

SIR JOHN WOODVIL, *and the* COLONEL.

Colonel. Pray consider, Sir.

Sir John. So I do, Sir, that I am her father, and will dispose of her as I please.

Col. I don't dispute your authority, Sir; but as I am your son too, I think it my duty to be concern'd for your honour: have not you countenanced his addresses to my sister? Has not she received them? How then is it possible, that either you or she with honour can recede?

Sir J. Why, Sir? Suppose I was about buying pad-nag for your sister, and upon enquiry should find him not sound: Pray, Sir, would there be any great dishonour in being off o' the bargain?

Col. With submission, Sir, I don't take that to be the case. Mr Heartly's birth and fortune are too well known to you; and I dare swear he may defy the world to lay a blemish upon his principles.

Sir J. Why then, Sir, since I must be catechized, I must tell you, I don't like his principles: for I am inform'd he is a time-server, one that basely flatters the government, and has no more religion than you have.

Col. Sir, we don't either of us think it proper to make boast of our religion; but if you please to enquire, you will find we go to church as orderly as the rest of our neighbours.

Sir J. Ay! to what church?

Col. St. James's church—the establish'd Church.

Sir J. Establish'd church.

Col. Sir——

Sir J. Nay, you need not flare, Sir; and before he values himself upon going to church, I would first have him be sure he is a Christian.

Col. A Christian, Sir!

Sir J. Ay, that's my question, whether he is yet christen'd? I mean by a pastor, that had a divine, uninterrupted, successive right to mark him as a sheep of the true fold?

Col. Is it possible! Are you an *Englishman*, and offer, Sir, a question so uncharitable, not only to him, but the whole nation?

Sir J. Nay, Sir, you may give yourself what airs of amazement you please;—I won't argue with you; you are both of you too harden'd to be converted now; but since you think it your duty, as a son, to be concern'd for my errors, I think it as much mine, as a father, to be concern'd for yours—I'll only tell you of them, if you think fit to mend them—so—if not—take the consequence.

Col. [*Aside*] Oh! give me temper, heav'n! this vile non-juring zealot!

what poisonous principles has he swell'd him with!—Well, Sir, since you don't think it proper to argue upon this subject, I'll wave it too: but, if I may ask it without offence, are these your only reasons for discountenancing Mr Heartly's addresses to my sister?

Sir J. These! Are they not flagrant? Would you have me marry my daughter to a Pagan? For so he is, and all of you, 'till you are regularly Christians. In short, son, expect to inherit no estate of mine, unless you resolve to come into the pale of the church, of which I profess myself a member.

Col. I thought I always was, Sir, and hope I am so still, unless you have lately been converted to the *Roman*.

Sir J. No, Sir, I abhor the thoughts on't; and protest against their errors as much as you do.

Col. If so, Sir, where's our difference?

Sir J. Difference! 't would make you tremble, Sir, to know it! but since 't is fit you should know it, look there—[*Gives him a book*]—read that, and be reformed.

Col. What's here? [*Reads.*] The Case of Schism, &c. Thank you, Sir, I have seen enough of this in the *Daily Courant*, to be sorry it's in any hands, but those of the common hangman.

Sir J. Prophanation!

Col. And though I always honour'd your concern for the church's welfare, I little thought 't was for a church that is establish'd nowhere.

Sir J. O! perverseness! But there is no better to be expected from your course of life: this is all the effects of your modern loyalty, your conversation at Button's. Will you never leave that foul nest of heresy and schism?

Col. Yes, Sir, when I see any thing like it there; and should think myself oblig'd to retire, where such principles were started—I own I use the place, because I generally meet there instructive or diverting company.

Sir J. Yes, fine company indeed, *Arians*, party-poets, players, and Presbyterians.

Col. That's a very unusual mixture, Sir; but if a man entertains me innocently, am I oblig'd to enquire into his profession, or principles? Would not it be ridiculous for a Protestant that loves musick, to refuse going to the Opera because most of the performers are Papists? But, Sir, this seems foreign to my business; Mr Heartly intends this morning to pay his respects to you, in hopes to obtain your final consent; and desired me to be present, as a mediator of articles between you.

Sir J. I am glad to hear it.

Col. That's kind indeed, Sir.

Sir J. May be not, Sir,—for I will not be at home when he comes.

Col. Nay, pray, Sir, 't will be but civility, at least, to hear him.

Sir J. And because I won't tell a lie for the matter, I'll go out this moment.

Col. Good Sir!

Sir J. But, because I won't deceive him neither, tell him, I would not have him lose his time, in fooling after your sister In short, I have another man in my head for her. [*Exit Sir John.*

Col. Another man! 'twould be worth one's while to know him—Pray Heaven this non-juring hypocrite has not got some beggarly traytor in his eye for her—I must rid the house of him at any rate, or all the settlement I can hope from my father is a castle in the air; nor can indeed his life be safe, while such a villain makes it an act of conscience to endanger it: if his eyes are not soon open'd against him the crown's more likely to inherit his estate than I am; and though the government has been very favourable upon those occasions, it is but a melancholy business to petition for what might have been one's birthright. My sister may be ruin'd too—Here she comes; if there be another man in the case, she no doubt can let me into the secret.

D, Page 149.

Cibber, in the first Scene of the second Act of *The Non-Juror*, has imitated the second Scene of the same Act of Molière's play; but Maria is not so obedient nor so well-behaved as the French Mariane, and resembles a little the waiting-maid Dorine. Sir John Woodvil is Orgon.

Sir John. I shall try that presently; and you, sweetheart, shall judge between us: In short, daughter, your course of life is but one continual round of playing the fool to no purpose; and therefore I am resolv'd to make you think seriously, and marry.

Maria. That I shall do before I marry, Sir, you may depend upon't.

Sir J. Um—That I am not so sure of, but you may depend upon my having thought seriously, and that's as well: For the person I intend you, is of all the world the only man can make you truly happy.

Mar. And of all the world, Sir, that's the only man I'll positively marry.

Lady Woodvil. [*Aside to Maria*] Thou hast rare courage, Maria; if I had such a game to play, I should be frighted out of my wits.

Mar. Lord, madam, he'll make nothing on't, depend upon it.

Sir J. Mind what I say to you—This wonderful man, I say—First, as to his principles, both in church and state, is unquestionable.

Mar. Sir, I leave all that to you, for I should never ask him a question about either of them.

Sir J. You need not, I am fully satisfied of both. He is a true, staunch member of the English Catholic Church.

Mar. Methinks, though, I would not have him a *Roman* Catholic, Sir, because you know of double taxes.

Sir J. No, he's no *Roman*.

Mar. Very well, Sir.

Sir J. Then as to the state, he'll shortly be one of the most considerable men in the kingdom, and that, too, in an office for life; which on whatsoever pretence of misbehaviour, no civil government can deprive him of.

Mar. That's fine indeed; I was afraid he had been a clergyman.

Sir J. I have not yet said what his function is—As for his private life—he's sober.

Mar. O! I should hate a sot.

Sir J. Chaste.

Mar. Ahem. [*Stifling a laugh.*

Sir J. What is't you sneer at, Madam? You want one of your fine gentleman rakes, I suppose, that are snapping at every woman they meet with.

Mar. No, no, Sir, I am very well satisfied—I—I should not care for such a sort of man no more than I should for one that every woman was ready to snap at.

Sir J. No, you'll be secure from jealousy; he has experience, ripeness of years: he is almost forty-nine: your sex's vanities will have no charm for him.

Mar. But all this while, Sir, I don't find that he has any charm for our sex's vanity. How does he look? Is he tall? well made? Does he dress, sing, talk, laugh, and dance well? Has he a good air, good teeth, fine eyes, fine fair perriwig? Does he keep his chaise, coach, chariot, and berlin, with six flouncing Flanders? Does he wear blue velvet, clear white stockings, and subscribe to the opera?

Sir J. Was there ever so profligate a creature? What will this age come to?

Lady W. Nay, Maria, here I must be against you. Now you are blind indeed; a woman's happiness has little to do with the pleasure her husband takes in his own person.

Sir J. Right.

Lady W. 'Tis not how he looks, but how he loves, is the point.

Sir J. Good again!

Lady W. And a wife is much more secure, that has charms for her husband, than when the husband has only charms for her.

Sir J. Admirable! go on, my dear.

Lady W. Do you think, child, a woman of five-and-twenty may not be much happier with an honest man of fifty, than the finest woman of fifty with a young fellow of five-and-twenty?

Sir J. Mark that.

Mar. Aye, but when two five-and-twenties come together, dear Papa, you must allow they have a chance to be fifty times as pleasant and frolicksome.

Sir J. Frolicksome! Why you sensual idiot, what have frolicks to

do with solid happiness? I am asham'd of you. Go, you talk worse than a girl at a boarding-school. Frolicksome! as if marriage were only a licence for two people to play the fool according to law! Methinks, madam, you have a better example of happiness before your face. There's one has ten times your understanding, and she, you find, has made a different choice.

Mar. Lord, Sir! how you talk? you don't consider people's temper. I don't say my lady is not in the right; but then you know, Papa, she's a prude, and I am a coquette; she becomes her character very well, I don't deny it, and I hope you see everything I do is as consistent with mine. Your wise folks may lay down what rules they please; but 'tis constitution that governs us all, and you can no more bring me, Sir, to endure a man of forty-nine, than you can persuade my lady to dance in a church to the organ.

Sir J. Why, you wicked wretch, could anything persuade you to that?

Mar. Lord, Sir! I won't answer for anything I should do when the whim's in my head. You know I always lov'd a little flirtation.

Sir J. Horrible! My poor mother has ruin'd her; leaving her a fortune in her own hands has turned her brain. In short, your sentiments of life are shameful, and I am resolv'd upon your instant reformation; therefore, as an earnest of your obedience, I shall first insist that you never see young Heartly more; for in one word, the good and pious Dr Wolf's the man that I have decreed your husband.

Mar. Ho! ho! ho! [*Laughing aloud.*

Sir J. 'Tis very well; this laugh, you think, becomes you, but I shall spoil your mirth. No more, give me a serious answer.

Mar. [*Gravely*] I ask your pardon, Sir, I should not have smil'd indeed, could I have supposed it possible that you were serious.

Sir J. You'll find me so.

Mar. I am sorry for it; but I have an objection to the doctor, Sir, that most father's think a substantial one.

Sir J. Name it.

Mar. Why, Sir, you know he is not worth a groat.

Sir J. That's more than you know, madam; I am able to give him a better estate than I'm afraid you'll deserve.

Mar. How, Sir?

Sir J. I have told you what's my will, and shall leave you to think on't.

E, Page 158.

Medbourne has translated literally the last Scene of the first Act of Molière's *Tartuffe*, as well as the beginning of the second act, in which Orgon persuades his daughter to marry Tartuffe, and in which the servant, Dorina, interferes. We give here, however, the famous scene in

which Mariana and Valère quarrel, and are finally reconciled by Dorine. This scene is in Medbourne and Molière's play the fourth of the second Act.

VALERE, MARIANA, DORINA.

Valère. Madam, just now strange News attack'd my Ear,
Before to me unknown, and which I doubt
May be too pleasing to you.
Mariana. Pray, what is't?
Val. That you must have Tartuffe to be your Husband.
Mar. 'T is very true, such a Design my Father has in 's Head.
Val. Your Father, Madam!
Mar. Yes Sir, my Father has quite chang'd his Mind,
And came a purpose to propose it to me.
Val. But are you serious?
Mar. Yes, in good Truth I am;
And for this Marriage highly he declares.
Val. And what wou'd you in this Affair design?
Speak, Madam.
Mar. I can't tell.
Val. The Answer's modest,
You cannot tell?
Mar. No.
Val. No?
Mar. What wou'd you Counsel me?
Val. I Counsel you to take him for a Husband.
Mar. Is that your Counsel, Sir?
Val. Yes.
Mar. But do you mean so?
Val. Yes.
The Choice is Noble, you ought to listen to 't.
Mar. 'T is well; I shall receive your Counsel, Sir.
Val. 'T will not pain you much to follow it.
Mar. Not quite so much as you have felt to give it.
Val. I gave 't a purpose, Madam, for to ease you.
Mar. And to please you I shall accept it, Sir.
Dorina. 'T is pleasant to observe how they 're entangl'd.
Val. Madam, is this the Love! Oh, fickle Sex!
Can you forget——
Mar. Pray do not speak of 't, Sir,
You frankly said I ought to listen to 't.
And since he is presented by my Father,
I do declare that I pretend t' accept him,
Since you have given me this wholesome Counsel.
Val. Do not excuse yourself with my Advice;
Your Resolutions were already made,

You catch at every frivolous Pretention
For an Authority to break your Word.
Mar. 'T is true, and you say well.
Val. And I do think,
You never had a real Passion for me.
Mar. Be 't so, y' have Permission, Sir, to think.
Val. Yes, I 've Permission; but
I'll prevent the like Design.
Mar. I do not doubt it, those Ardours that excite
True Merit——
Val. Mariana, do not talk on 't;
I have but little, and you have proved it now;
But 't is some Comfort to me,
That without Shame they can repair my Loss.
Mar. The Loss of this is little, since by this one Change,
You can so easily find Reparation.
Val. I will do what I can, you may believe it,
Our Glory is engag'd to make 't our Business,
Which though we cannot compass, we should feign it.
Mar. Sir, this Resentment's Generous and Noble.
Val. 'T is well, and every one ought to approve it.
How between Love and Passion am I split?
Must I then see you clos'd in other's Arms?
Not caring for that Heart you have enslav'd.
Mar. All my Designs require the contrary,
For I could wish the Marriage-knot were ty'd,
So to unite our pre-engaged Hearts.
Val. But cou'd you wish it!
Mar. Yes.
Val. These insulting Trials are too much;
Madam, farewell. [*He makes a step forwards and returns.*
Mar. 'T is well done, Sir.
Val. At least remember, Madam, that 't is you
Constrain my Heart to this Extremity.
Mar. Yes.

The remainder of this scene is similar to Molière's. This is the advice of Dorina after she has reconciled the quarrelling lovers.

Dor. Come let us cast our Plots in several Forms;
Your Father's fond Resolves shall never daunt you,
If you think fit to follow my Advice:
For you 't were better, to 's Extravagance,
To lend the sweet Appearance of Consent,
In Case of an Alarm; that with more Ease
You may propose a longer day of Marriage.
By Time we purchase Remedy for all.

Sometimes you may pretend you are not well;
A sudden Sickness will procure Delays.
Another while may apprehend bad Omens;
As that you met by Chance with a dead Man;
Threw down the Salt, or dreamt of Muddy-waters;
But if all these together will not do,
One Comfort yet remains, that all the World
Can ne'er oblige you, if you say not Yes.
But above other Things I think it fitting
That now you part, lest you be seen together.
Go, and delay not, muster all your Friends,
To make him keep the Promise that he made you;
While we procure his Brother to our side,
And to our Party join the Mother-in-law.
So fare you well.

F, Page 165.

Molière's second Scene of the third Act of *Tartuffe* has been imitated by Cibber, in *The Non-Juror* (end of first Act). Tartuffe is called Doctor Wolf.

Act I. Scene I.

Enter Doctor Wolf *and* Charles.

Doctor. Charles, step into my study, and bring down half-a-dozen more of those manual devotions that I compos'd for the use of our friends in prison; and, dost thou hear? leave this writing there, but bring me the key, and then bid the butler ring to prayers. [*Exit Charles.*] Mr Heartly, I am your most faithful servant, I hope you and the good Colonel will stay and join in the private duties of the family.

Heartly. With all my heart, Sir, provided you'll do the duty of a subject too, and not leave out the prayer for the royal family.

Doc. The good Colonel knows, I never do omit it.

Col. Sometimes, doctor; but I don't remember I ever once heard you name them.

Doc. That's only to shorten the service, lest in so large a family, some few vain, idle souls might think it tedious; and we ought, as it were, to allure them to what's good, by the gentlest, easiest means we can.

Hear. How! how, doctor! are you sure that's your only reason for leaving their names out?

Doc. But pray, Sir, why is naming them so absolutely necessary? when heaven, without it, knows the true intention of our hearts? beside, why should we, when we so easily may avoid it, give the least colour of offence to tender consciences?

Col. Ay, now you begin to open, doctor.

Hear. Have a care, Sir, the conscience that equivocates in its devotions, must have the blackest colour hell can paint it with.

Col. Well said to him, Heartly.

Hear. Your conscience, I dare say, won't be easily convinc'd, while your scruples turn to so good account in a private family.

Doc. What, am I to be baited then—but 't won't be always holiday. [*Frowning*] The time's now yours, but mine may come.

Col. What do you mean, Sir?

Doc. Sir, I shall not explain myself, but make your best of what I've said. I'm not to be intrap'd by all your servile spies of power.—But power, perhaps, may change its hands, and you, e'er long, as little dare to speak your mind as I do.

Col. [*Taking him by the collar*] Hark you, Sirrah, dare you menace the government in my hearing?

Hear. Nay, Colonel. [*Interposing.*

Doc. 'Tis well!

Col. Traytor! but that our laws have chains and gibbets for such villains, I'd this moment crackle all thy bones to splinters. [*Shakes him.*

Doc. Very well; your father, Sir, shall know my treatment.

Hear. Nay, dear Colonel, let him go.

Col. I ask your pardon, Frank; I am asham'd that such a wretch should move me so.

Hear. Come, compose yourself.

Doc. [*Aside, and recovering himself*] No! I'll take no notice of it.—I know he's warm and weak enough to tell this as his own story to his father——let him——'tis better so——'twill but confirm Sir John in his good opinion of my charity, and serve to ruin him the faster. [*Exit.*

Hear. Was there ever so insolent a rascal?

Col. The dog will one day provoke me to beat his brains out.

Hear. Who could have believ'd such outrageous arrogance could have lurk'd under so lamb-like an outside?

Col. This fellow has the spleen and spirit of ten Beckets in him.

Hear. What the devil is he? whence came he? what's his original? Is he really a doctor?

Col. So he pretends, and that he lost his living in Ireland, upon his refusing the oaths to the government. Now, I have made the strictest inquiries, and can't find the least evidence, that ever he was in the country. But (as I hinted to you) there is now in prison a poor unhappy rebel, I went to school with, whose pardon I am soliciting, and he assures me, he knew him very well in Flanders; and, in such circumstances, as when it can be serviceable to me to know them, he faithfully promises to discover, but begs till then I will not insist upon it.

Hear. Igad, this intelligence may be worth your cherishing.

G, Page 166.

Molière's third Scene of the third Act of *Tartuffe* has been imitated as follows by Cibber, in *The Non-Juror* (same Act, same Scene). Elmire is called Lady Woodvil.

Doctor. I am told, madam, you deign me the happiness of your commands. I am proud you think me worthy of them in any sort.

Lady Woodvil. Please to sit, Sir.

Doct. Did not Sir John inform you too, that I had desir'd a private conference with your ladyship?

Lady W. He did, Sir.

Doct. 'Tis then by his permission we are thus happily alone.

Lady W. True, and 'tis on that account I wanted to advise with you.

Doct. Well, but, dear lady, Ah, [*Sighing*] you can't conceive the joyousness I feel in this so unexpected interview. Ah! I have a thousand friendly things to say to you. Ah! ah! and how stands your precious health? is your naughty cold abated yet? I have scarce closed my eyes these two nights with my concern for you, and every watchful interval has sent a thousand sighs and prayers to heaven for your recovery.

Lady W. Your charity was too far concern'd for me.

Doct. Ah! don't say so, don't say so; you merit more than mortal man can do for you.

Lady W. Indeed, you over-rate me.

Doct. I speak it from my soul! indeed! indeed! indeed! I do.

[*Presses her hand.*

Lady W. O dear, you hurt my hand, Sir.

Doct. Impute it to my zeal, and want of words to express my heart; Ah! I would not harm you for the world, no, bright creature, 'tis the whole business of my soul to——

Lady W. But to our affair, Sir.

Doct. Ah! thou heavenly woman!

[*Laying his hand on her knee.*

Lady W. Your hand need not be there, Sir.

Doct, Ah! I was admiring the softness of this silk, madam.

Lady W. Ay, but I am ticklish.

Doct. They are indeed come to a prodigious perfection in this manufacture.—How wonderful is human art.—Here it disputes the prize with nature,—that all this soft and gaudy lustre should be wrought from the poor labours of a worm! [*Stroking it.*

Lady W. But our business, Sir, is upon another subject. Sir John informs me, that he thinks himself under no obligation to Mr Heartly, and therefore resolves to give you Maria; now pray be sincere, and let me know what your real intentions are?

Doct. Is it possible? Can you, divine perfection, be still a stranger to my real thoughts? Has no one action of my life inform'd you better? Since I must plainly speak them then, Maria's but a feint, a blind to screen my real thoughts from shrewd suspicion's eye, and shield your spotless fame from worldly censure. Could you then think 'twas for Maria's sake, your balls, assemblies, and your toilet visits have been restrain'd? Would I have urg'd Sir John to make that fence to enclose a butterfly? No, soft, and serious excellence, your virtues only were the object of my care; I could not bear to see the gay, the young, and the inconstant, daily basking in your diffusive beams of beauty, without a secret grudge, I might say, envy ev'n of such insect's happiness.

Lady W. Well, Sir, I take all this, as I suppose you intended it, for my good, my spiritual welfare.

Doct. Indeed I meant you serious, cordial service.

Lady W. I dare say you did, you are above the low and momentary views of this world.

Doct. Ah! I should be so—and yet, alas! I find this mortal cloathing of my soul is made, like other men's, of sensual flesh and blood, and has its frailties.

Lady W. We all have those, but yours, I know, are well corrected by your divine and virtuous contemplations.

Doct. And yet our knowledge of external beauties, does not refrain us wholly from the love of all that's mortal. Beauty, here, 'tis true, must die, but while it lives, 'twas given us to admire, to wake the sluggish heart, and charm the sensible. At the first sight of you, I felt unusual transports in my soul, and trembled at the guilt that might ensue; but on reflection found my flame received a sanction from your goodness, and might be reconcil'd with virtue; on this, I chased my sland'rous fears, let in the harmless passion at my eyes, and gave up all my heart to love.

Col. [*Behind*] Indeed! so warm, Sir Roger! but I shall cool your passion with a witness. [*Exit.*

Lady W. These gay professions, Sir, show more the courtier than the zealot; nor could I think a mind so fortify'd as yours, could have been open to such vain temptations.

Doct. What bosom can be proof 'gainst such artillery of love? I may resist, call all my prayers, my failings, tears, and penance to my aid, but yet, alas! these have not made an angel of me. I am still but man: virtue may strive, but nature will be uppermost: permit me, then, on this fair shrine, to pay my vows, and offer up a heart——

Lady W. Hold, Sir, you've said enough to put you in my power; suppose I now should let my husband, Sir, your benefactor, know the favour you design'd him. [*She rises.*

Doct. You cannot be so cruel?

Lady W. Nor will, on one condition.

Doct. Name it.

Lady W. That instantly you renounce all claim and title to Maria, and use your utmost interest with Sir John to give her, with her full fortune, to Mr Heartly. If you are wise consider on't.

[*Sir John and Colonel behind.*

[*The Doctor turning accidentally sees them.*

Doct. Ha! the colonel there! his father with him too! here may have been some treachery; what's to be done? [*Aside.*

H, Page 183.

Medbourne follows Molière very closely throughout the whole play. In the following way Tartuffe's love for Elmire (Act iv., Scene 5) is discovered when her husband is under the table. It is the same Scene of the same Act in Molière's *Tartuffe*.

Tartuffe. They told me, Madam, you would speak with me.

Elmira. Yes, I have a secret to reveal to you;
But shut the Door, and search about the Chamber;
I am unwilling we should be surpris'd.
[*He goes back and bolts the Door.*
An Accident like that last happen'd to us,
Wou'd now be more unwelcome than before;
Damis did fright me strangely for your Sake;
But you perceiv'd, I hope, there was no want
Of Will in me to change the Scene, and turn
His Rage 'gainst you into a quiet Calm.
I must confess, I was so much amazed,
That I had no Invention to disguise it.
But, Heaven be praised! it prov'd all for the best,
And things are now in more Security;
Your Estimation has allay'd the Storm,
And Orgon (to out-brave the People's vogue)
Allows us freer Converse at all Times.
Hence it proceeds, that without fear or Blame
I see myself Lock'd up with you alone.
This has emboldened me to open a Heart
Unable longer to resist your Love.

Tar. 'T is difficult to comprehend this Language;
You lately, Madam, talk'd another Style.

El. If that Denial, Sir, did anger you,
You have small Knowledge of a Woman's Heart.
Our Modesties pretend to give you Battle,
Even in that Instant we intend Surrender:
With the same Reasons we disown our Loves

We do proclaim 'em, and that very Moment
Our Tongues in Honour do oppose our Wishes:
The Weakness of Refusal is a Promise.
In thee my Freedom without Doubt I've made
But very little use of Modesty——
And since the Word is out e'en let it go.
D'ye think I wou'd have stay'd with so much Mildness,
To listen to the Proffer of your Love,
Or wou'd have taken Things with such a Calm,
If the Offer of your Heart had not been pleasing?

Tar. 'Tis, Madam, without doubt, a mighty Happiness
To hear such Language from a Mouth of Love;
The Honey of your Words drops on my Senses
Such a Suavity was never tasted.
My chiefest Study still has been to please you;
And all my Wishes seem to be accomplish'd;
But yet my Heart demands the Liberty,
To doubt a little its Beatitude.
If I may literally expound myself;
Such soft Proposals I can scarce mistrust:
Might I but taste those Favours that I sigh for
It wou'd assure me much of all you say;
And in my Bosom plant a constant Faith
Of all those Charming Bounties you have for me.
[*Draws near to Elmira.*

El. What in such haste; nay, Mr Tartuffe, fye;
These greatest Favours are not gain'd at once:
I almost dy'd t' unfold my Thoughts to you,
And yet you seem not to be satisfy'd:
You have not shew'd such Courage as wou'd merit
Those highest Favours to be granted by us.

Tar. The less I merit, the less I dare to hope for;
And this Discourse does not confirm my Wish:
We are suspicious of a hasty Fortune:
Yet wou'd Enjoy before we can believe it.
I have so little merited this Bounty,
That I suspect the happy Consequence;
This, Madam, makes me slow in my Belief,
Till you convince me by Reality.

El. Your Love does act like a fierce Tyrant, Sir;
Taking a furious Sovereignty o'er Hearts,
And presses to its end with too much Violence.
What, will you not allow me time to breathe?
D'ye think this Rigour does become you, Sir?
To press so hard upon my feeble Weakness?

Tar. But since you have Respect for my Addresses,

Why d' ye refuse to give me Pledges of it?
El. Pray how can I consent to what you 'd have,
Without offending Heaven?
Tar. If that be all,
A little thing removes that Obstacle.
El. But I do dread what is by Heaven forbid.
Tar. Such Fears are vain, I can remove these Scruples.
'T is true, Heaven does forbid us certain Pleasures,
But there remains a Means for Composition:
We may abate the Evil of our Actions
By the Sincerity of our Intentions.
I can instruct you in these Secrets, Madam;
Dispose yourself to me for your safe Conduct:
Content but my Desire, and fear Nothing;
I 'll answer all and take the Sin on Me.
You Cough extremely, Madam.
El. Yes, I have caught Cold. [*She coughs again.*
[*Aside*] Transcendant Villain! this Language proves thee so.
Tar. Please you to take some Juice of Liquorish?
El. This Rheum is obstinate without, I see;
That all the Juice i' th' World will do no good. [*She continues.*
Tar. 'T is very troublesome.
El. Yes, beyond Expression.
Tar. In short, your Scruple 's easily destroy'd;
I will assure you this great Secret,
The Sin is when we make it Publick, Madam;
Th' Offence is lodg'd i' th' Scandal of the World:
We do not Sin when we do act in Secret.
[*After she has done coughing.*
El. Well, Sir; I see I must resolve to yield
And find myself consenting to your Will.
[*Speaks subtilly, addressing herself to both.*
I ought not to pretend to less than this,
That I 'm content and willing now to render:
But yet it grieves me too to come thus far;
And 't is against my Will I am thus free:
Yet since the Obstinate won't now deliver me,
And wo' not yet believe what I have said,
But does desire more Pregnant Testimonies,
I must resolve immediate Satisfaction,
If this Consent of mine be an Offence,
The worst is theirs who force this Violence.

The remainder of the fourth Act is precisely the same as Molière's.

I, Page 190.

Cibber, in *The Non-Juror* (Act v., Scene 3), has imitated the fifth, sixth, and seventh Scenes of the fourth Act of Molière's *Tartuffe*.

Enter DOCTOR *with a book.*

Doctor. Your woman told me, madam, you were here alone, and desired to speak with me.

Lady Wood. I did, sir; but that we may be sure we are alone, pray shut the outward door, and see that passage too be clear, another surprise might ruin us—is all safe?

Doct. I have taken care, madam.

Lady W. I am afraid I interrupt your meditations.

Doct. Say rather you improve them: You, madam, were the subject of my solitary thoughts, I take in all the little aids I can to guard my frailty, and truly I have received great consolation from an unfortunate example here before me.

Lady W. Pray of what kind, sir?

Doct. I had just dipt into poor *Eloisa's* passion for *Abelard:* It is indeed a piteous conflict! How terrible! How penitent a sense she shews of guilty pleasures past, and fruitless pains to shut them from her memory.

Lady W. I have read her story, sir.

Doct. Is it not pitiful?

Lady W. A heart of stone might feel for her.

Doct. O! think then, what I endure for you, such are my pains, but such is my sincerity, tho' I fear my being reduc'd to feign a passion for *Maria*, in my late surprize, has done dishonour to the vows I then preferr'd to you.

Lady W. 'Twas on that point, I wanted now to talk with you, not knowing then, how far you might mistake my silence: Now had I clos'd with the colonel in accusing you, it would have been plain I was your enemy; as had I join'd in your defence against him, it had been as grossly evident I was his; but since I have uses for his friendship, and, as I saw your credit with Sir *John* needed no support, I hope you'll think betwixt the two extremes I have acted but a prudent part.

Doct. Let me presume to hope then, what I did, you judge was self-defence, and pure necessity.

Lady W. 'Twas wonderful! surprizing to perfection! The wit of it—but I won't tell you, what effect it had upon me.

Doct. Why, madam? let me beseech you.

Lady W. No, 'twas nothing—besides—what need you ask me?

Doct. Why do you thus decoy my foolish heart, and feed it with such *Hybla* drops of flattery? You cannot sure think kindly of me.

Lady W. O well feign'd fear! You too, I find can flatter in your

turn: You know how well the subtle force of modesty prevails. O men! men! men!

Doct. 'Twere arrogance to think I have deserv'd this goodness: But treat me as you please, I'll be at least sincere to you, and frankly own, I still suspect, that all this softening favour is but artifice.

Lady W. Well! well! I'd have you think so.

Doct. What transport would it give to be assured I wrong you! but O! I fear this shadow of compliance is only meant to lure me from *Maria*, and then as fond *Ixion's* were of old, to fill my arms with air.

Lady W. Methinks this doubt of me, seems rather founded on your second thoughts of not resigning her; 'tis she, I find is your substantial happiness.

Doct. O that you could but fear I thought so! how easy 'twere to prove my coldness, or my love.

Lady W. O, sir, you have convinced me now of both.

Doct. Can all this pretty anger then be real? take heed, fair creature, it flatters more than kindness.

Lady W. I can assure you, sir, I should have spared you this trouble, had I known how deeply you were engaged to her.

Doct. Nay, then I must believe you: but indeed you wrong me, to prove my innocence, 'tis not an hour since I press'd Sir *John* to give *Maria* to young *Heartly*.

Lady W. O! all artifice! you knew that modest resignation would make Sir *John* but warmer in your interest.

Doct. Since you will rip the secret from my heart——know then, I actually have sold her, like a bauble, to her childish lover, for two thousand times her value.

Lady W. Are you serious?

Doct. As this is true or false, may I in you be blest or miserable.

Lady W. But how can you suppose Sir *John* will ever hear of it.

Doct. 'Alas! poor man! he knows not his own weakness, he's moulded into any shape, if you but gently stroke his humour. I dare depend on his consent——beside, I intend to-morrow to persuade him 'tis for the interest of our cause it should be so, and then I have him sure.

Lady W. Fy! how is that possible? He can't be so implicitly credulous. You don't take him sure for a Roman Catholic.

Doct. Um——not absolutely——But, poor soul! he little thinks how near he is one. 'Tis true, name to him but Rome, or Popery, he startles as at a monster; but gild its grossest doctrines with the style of English Catholick, he swallows down the poison like a cordial.

Lady W. Nay, if he's so far within your power, it cannot fail; he must consent. Well, sir, now I give you leave to guess the reason why I too, at our last meeting, so warmly prest you to resign Maria.

Doct. Is it possible? Was I then so early your concern?

Lady W. You cannot blame me, sure, for having there oppos'd your happiness.

Doct. I die upon the transport. [*Taking her hand.*

Lady W. Be sure you are secret now. Your least imprudence makes these, like fairy favours, vanish in a moment.

Doct. How can you form so vain a fear?

Lady W. Call it not vain, for let our converse end in what it may, you still shall find my fame is dear to me as life.

Doct. Where can it find so sure a guard? The grave austerity of my life will strike suspicion dumb, and yours may mock the malice of detraction. I am no giddy, loose-liv'd courtier, whose false professions end only in the boast of favours. No, fair, spotless miracle, the mysteries of love are only fit for hearts recluse and elevate as mine: My happiness, like yours, depending on my secrecy.

Lady W. 'Tis you must answer for this folly.

Doct. I take it whole upon myself—the guilt be only mine, but be our transports mutual.——Come, lovely creature, let us withdraw to privacy, where murmuring love shall hush thy fears, and lose them in the burning joy. [*Sir John, stepping softly behind him, seizes him by the throat.*

Sir John. Traytor!

Doct. Ah! *astonished.*

Sir John. Is this thy sanctity! this thy doctrine! these thy meditations! If stung with my abuses, I now should stab thee to the heart, what devil durst murmur 'twere not an act of justice? But since thy vile hypocrisy unmask'd, must make mankind abhor thee, be thy own shame thy living punishment.

Doct. Do! Triumph, Sir——your artifice has well succeeded ——I see your ends! You needed not so deep a plot to part with me. [*Trembling.*

Sir John. Suppress thy weak evasions——Ungrateful wretch! Have I for this redeem'd thee from the jaws of gaping poverty, fed, cloath'd, lov'd, preferr'd thee to my bosom, to my family, and fortune? Wife, children, friends, servants, all that were not friends to thee, accounted as my enemies; nay, more, to crown my faith in thee, I have relied on thy integrity ev'n for my future happiness; and how hast thou in one short day requited me? Taking the advantage of my blinded passion, thou hast turn'd the duty of my son to his undoing; sordidly hast sold the trust I made thee of, my daughter, attempted, like a felonious traytor, to seduce my wife, and hast, I fear, with poisonous doctrines, too, insnared my soul.

Lady W. Now Heaven be praised his heart seems conscious of his error. [*Aside.*

Sir John. But why do I reproach thee? had I not been the weakest of mankind, thou never could'st have proved so great a villain—— Whether Heaven intends all this to punish, or to save me yet, I know

not; my senses stagger at the view, and my reflexion's lost in wild astonishment. [*He stands musing.*

Doct. This snare was worthy of you, madam; 'tis you have made this villain of me. [*Apart to Lady Wood.*

Lady W. You would have made me worse, but I have only shown him what you were before.

Doct. I thank you.

Lady W. Thank your own ingratitude and wickedness; but I must now pursue my victory. [*Exit Lady W.*

Doct. [*Apart*] No, it ends not here. He was not brought to listen to this proof alone! There's something deeper yet designed against me—— I must be speedy—— Suppose I talk with *Charles*, alarm him with our common danger, point out his ruin as our only means of safety, and like the panther in the toil provoked, turn short with vengeance on my hunters.

Sir John. What! still within my sight! of all my follies, which is it tells thee, that I now shall keep my temper.

Doct. [*Turning boldly to him*] Whom do you menace, me, sir? Reflect upon your own condition first, and where you are.

Sir John. What would the villain drive at! I pr'ythee leave me, I cannot look on thee! Thy over-bearing insolence confounds me: But since thy wickedness has turn'd my eyes upon myself, and to thy crimes detected, I hope to owe my future innocence, as the sore wound the viper gives, the viper best can cure: For that one good may Heaven like me forgive thee: But seek thy biding in some other place ——out of my house this instant, Hence! Begone! and see my shameful face no more.

Doct. Nay, then, 'tis time to be myself, and let you know, that I am master here, turn you out, sir, this house is mine! and now, sir, at your peril dare to insult me.

Sir John. O! Heav'n 'tis true, thou hast disarm'd my justice, and turn'd its sword into my own weak bosom—— I had forgot my folly, 'tis fit it should be so, and Heav'n is just, at once to let me see my crime, and punishment.—O my poor injur'd son!—— Whither shall I fly to hide me from the world?

AMPHITRYON.

COMÉDIE.

AMPHITRYON.

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)

13TH JANUARY 1668.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE history of Amphitryon and Alcmena, or rather the myth of the birth of Hercules, is certainly very old, and is to be found in the literature of different nations. The Indians, the Greeks, and the Romans were acquainted with it; and it exists also among the legendary tales of the Middle Ages, but always modified according to the several nationalities where we meet with it, and has sometimes a tragical, sometimes a jocular or ironical, ending.

Voltaire, in his *Historical Fragments about India*, in the twenty-eighth article on *The Terrestrial Paradise of the Indians*, relates how the story of Amphitryon is found amongst the oldest fables of the Brahmins. A certain Brahmin having quarrelled with his wife, gave her a beating and left her; an Indian divinity of an inferior rank adopted the appearance of the Brahmin, made his peace with her, and lived for some time with her, until the real husband, who repented of his former behaviour, came back again. But the man in possession declared that the other was an impostor, and at last the affair was brought before the Synod of Benares, who ordered an ordeal, which cannot be related, but in which finally the evil-minded divinity betrayed himself, and the lawful husband was reinstated in the matrimonial abode.[1]

Euripides, Epicharmus, and Archippos have also handled this subject, and produced it on the Greek stage; but their plays are lost. Plautus, the father of Roman comedy, has written an *Amphitruo*, which he himself calls in the prologue "Tragico-Comœdia." As Molière owes a great deal of his comedy to his Latin prototype, we cannot do better than give Sir Walter Scott's Introduction to Dryden's remodelling of *Amphitryon*:—"Plautus, the venerable father of Roman comedy, who flourished during the second Punic war, left us a play on the subject of Amphitryon, which has had the honour to be deemed worthy of imitation by Molière and Dryden. It cannot be expected that the plain, blunt, and inartificial style of so rude an age should bear any comparison with that of the authors who enjoyed the highest advantages of the polished times to which they were an ornament. But the merit of

[1] Moland and several other commentators of Molière say that Voltaire found this Indian legend in Colonel Dow's book. I have looked in Voltaire; but he does not say so, nor can I find it in Dow's *Inaijat Allah*,—tales translated from the Persian, nor in his *History of Hindostan*.

having devised and embodied most of the comic distresses, which have excited laughter throughout so many ages, is to be attributed to the ancient bard upon whose original conception of the plot his successors have made few and inconsiderable improvements. It is true that, instead of a formal Prologue who stepped forth in the character of Mercury and gravely detailed to the audience the plot of the play, Molière and Dryden have introduced it in the modern, more artificial method, by the dialogue of the actors in the first scene. It is true, also, that with great contempt of one of the unities, afterwards deemed so indispensable by the ancients, Plautus introduces the birth of Hercules into a play, founded upon the intrigue which occasioned the event. Yet with all these disadvantages, and that rude flatness of his dialogue,—resting frequently, for wit, upon the most miserable puns,—the comic device of the two Sosias, the errors into which the malice of Mercury plunges his unlucky original, the quarrel of Alcmena with her real husband, and her reconciliation with Jupiter in his stead, the final confronting of the two Amphitryons, and the astonishment of the unfortunate general at finding every proof of his identity exhibited by his rival, are all, however rudely sketched, the inventions of the Roman poet. In one respect it would seem that the *jeu de théâtre* necessary to render the piece probable upon the stage, was better managed in the time of Plautus than in that of Dryden and Molière. Upon a modern stage it is evidently difficult to introduce two pairs of characters so extremely alike as to make it at all probable, or even possible, that the mistakes, depending upon their extreme resemblance, could take place. But, favoured by the masks and costume of the ancient theatre, Plautus contrived to render Jupiter and Mercury so exactly like Amphitryon and Sosia, that they were obliged to retain certain marks, supposed to be invisible to the other persons of the drama, by which the audience themselves might be enabled to distinguish the gods from the mortals whose forms they had assumed."

The history of Amphitryon, strangely disguised, is also found in the long series of the romances of the *San-Graal* and of the *Round Table*, and refers to the birth of King Arthur, and not to that of Hercules. In the following manner Robert of Gloucester tells the tale, after Geoffry of Monmouth and Wace:—

> "At the fest of Estre the kyng (Uther Pendragon) sende ys sonde,
> That heo comen alle to London the hey men of this londe . . .
> Alle the noble men of this lond to the noble fest come,
> And heore wyves and heore dogtren with hem mony nome,
> This fest was noble ynow, and nobliche y do;
> For mony was the faire ledy, that y come was therto.
> Ygerne, Gorloys wyf, was fairest of echon,
> That was contasse of Cornewail, for so fair nas ther non.
> The kyng by huld hire faste y now, and wys herte on hire caste,
> And thogte, thay heo were wyf, to do folye atte laste."

But she refused to listen to him, and told all to her husband, who, full

of anger and "with oute leve of the kyng," went back to his own country. Then Gorloys placed his wife and some of his troops in a very strong fortress, Tintagell, and went himself with a division of his retainers into another fortress of Cornwall. Uther soon made his appearance, and "the castel, that the erl inne was, the king by segede faste." But Ygerne was never out of his thoughts, and "the castel ys so strong that the lady ys inne," that he gave himself up to the greatest despair. Merlyn, who "was sory ynow for the kynge's folye," was sent for, and by his magic art he gave to Uther the appearance of Gorloys, while he himself, and Ulfyn, the king's confidant, assumed the outward looks of two of the earl of Cornwall's "men," Brithoel and Jordan. Thus changed, they appear before the castle, where the countess was, and the porter, seeing his lord and his friends, let them in. "The contas was glad y now, tho hire lord to hire com, and eyther other in here armes myd gret joye nom." In the meantime the king's men took the castle where the earl was, Gorloys was slain, and these tidings were brought to Ygerne. The pretended earl told her, however, that he had left his own castle secretly, "that none of myne men yt nuste," and that he was going back to "the kynge, and make my pays with him." He went away and "come toward ys men, ys own forme he nom." Afterwards king Uther married the noble and widowed countess, but on that night, when he appeared as Gorloys,

> "Bi gete was the beste body, that ever was in this londe,
> Kyng Arthure the noble mon, that ever worthe understonde."

There is a great difference between the Celtic and classical tradition. Ygerne is not wholly unlike Alcmena: but the comical element is totally wanting in the first, whilst Arthur and Merlin, although peculiar in their notions of love and morality, are staid and mysterious personages.

Plautus' *Amphitryo* was acted in Latin, in Italy, in the fifteenth century, and in 1560 Lodovico Dolce brought out an imitation of it, under the title of *Il Marito*. But two earlier translations of this play already existed in Spanish; one in prose, done by Francisco de Villalobos, physician to Charles the Fifth, which was published in 1515, and another by Fernando Perez de Oliva, principal of the university of Salamanca. Camoens, the poet of the Lusiad, produced a piece in imitation of Plautus' comedy, which, according to de Sismondi's *Historical view of the Literature of the South of Europe*, "is executed with considerable wit and spirit." In 1638, Jean de Rotrou published an imitation of the Latin comedy, in French, which he called *The two Sosias*, and in 1650, only a short time before his death, he remodelled his piece, for the theatre du Marais, as *une grande pièce à machines*, which bore the title of *The birth of Hercules*. In 1653 there was represented at the court the grand *Ballet of Night*, arranged by Benserade, with machinery by Torelli. The sixth *entrée* of the second *veille*, is occupied

by a pantomime (*comédie muette*), which is chiefly based on Plautus' plot.

Fifteen years after this pantomime, Molière fixed upon the same subject, and wrote his *Amphitryon*, one of the most charming and natural comedies composed in French verse. But his husband is not the Roman spouse, who is rather proud of having a god for *collaborateur*, nor does his Jupiter, who threatens to kill himself before Alcmena's eyes, give a very correct idea of the classical "father of gods and men." But, on the other hand, his Cleanthis is a happy creation, and the model of a "nagging" but virtuous woman, so fond of using her tongue, that even Mercury, although a god under the disguise of her husband, rather avoids responding to her uxorious advances, and thereby causes an increase of the wrath of the shrew. This greatly enhances the comic interest of the play, and forms an amusing contrast to the display of conjugal tenderness between Jupiter, the pretended Amphitryon, and the newly-married Alcmena. Sprightliness and vivacity abound in this comedy, which are enhanced by the short and long verses, used whenever suitable, and the alternate rhymes, in which it is written.

It has been said that Molière, in producing his *Amphitryon*, wished to flatter the nascent passion of Louis XIV. for Madame de Montespan, but this accusation seems to me absolutely without foundation. This play was represented on the 13th of January 1668; and it was only some months later that this high-born lady became the recognised mistress of the King, who would not have permitted any allusions to be made to his amours. Moreover, *Amphitryon* was not represented at Court, but at the theatre of the Palais Royal, so that the allusions —if any existed—must have appeared to the Parisian public, at all times inclined to be satirical, as far from complimentary. In any case the comedy was very successful, and was represented twenty-nine consecutive times.

Amphitryon was dedicated to the Prince de Condé in the following words :—

My Lord,

Under favour of the Wits, I know nothing more impertinent than Dedications; and Your most serene Highness will give me leave not to follow here the style of those gentlemen, and to omit using two or three miserable thoughts, which have been turned and returned so often, that they are worn threadbare. The name of the Great *Condé* is too glorious a name to be treated like other names. That illustrious name must be applied to no uses unworthy of it; and were I to say fine things, I would rather talk of putting it at the head of an army, than at the head of a book; and I should much better conceive what it is able to do, by opposing it to the forces of the enemies of the state, than by opposing it to the criticism of the enemies of a Play.

Not but that your serene highness' approbation is a powerful protection for all these kinds of works, and that people are persuaded of your knowledge, as well as of your intrepid courage and your greatness of soul. It is known throughout the whole world, that your merit is not circumscribed by the bounds of that un-

conquerable valour which gains adorers even amongst those whom it vanquishes; that that merit extends even to the nicest and sublimest sciences; and that your decisions concerning intellectual works never fail to be assented to even by the most fastidious. But it is likewise known, my Lord, that all those glorious approbations which we boast of to the public cost us nothing to print, and that they are things which we dispose of at pleasure. It is known, I say, that an epistle dedicatory says what it pleases, and that an author has it in his power to lay hold of the most august persons, and to adorn the first leaves of his book with their great names; that he has the liberty therein to give himself the honour of their esteem as much as he will, and to make to himself protectors who never had the least thoughts of being so.

I shall neither abuse your name, nor your goodness, my Lord, to oppugn the critics of *Amphitryon*, and to assume a glory which perhaps I have not deserved; and I take the liberty of offering you my play, only to have the opportunity of letting you know that I incessantly regard with profound veneration, the great qualities which you join to the august blood from which you descend, and that I am, my Lord, with all possible respect, and imaginable zeal, your most serene Highness' very humble, very obedient, and very obliged servant,

MOLIÈRE.

In the seventh volume of the translated Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732, this play is dedicated to the Right Honourable George Dodington, Esq., in the following words:—

SIR,—YOU are so generally known to be an Encourager of Literature, that every Professor of it, from the highest to the lowest, considers you as his Friend; and grows ambitious of paying his best Respects to one whose Genius, Learning, Politeness, Candor, Benevolence, and Love of the Muses are so eminently remarkable. Give me leave therefore to lay before you a Translation of MOLIERE'S *Amphitrion:* the Fruits of my leisure Hours. And as the Rhyme and Measure of the Verses in the *Original* make it difficult to be render'd literally into *English Prose*, be so good to excuse such Passages as your Judgment cannot approve.

Most Writers would lanch out on this occasion, and elaborately draw a Character which, however pleasing it might prove to others, would, I am confident, be disagreeable to you.—But, for my part, I shall only add, that whatsoever Motives *Dedications* usually proceed from, the sole Intent of this is to assure you and all the World, that I am, with great esteem, SIR,—*Your most Obedient Humble Servant,*

THE TRANSLATOR.

John Dryden, in his *Amphitryon*, performed in 1690, has borrowed both from Plautus and Molière; "But," says Sir Walter Scott, "the wretched taste of the age has induced him to lard the piece with gratuitous indelicacy. He is, in general, coarse and vulgar, where Molière is witty; and where the Frenchman ventures upon a double meaning, the Englishman always contrives to make it a single one. Yet, although inferior to Molière, and accommodated to the gross taste of the seventeenth century, 'Amphitryon' is one of the happiest effusions of Dryden's comic muse. He enriched the plot by the intrigue of Mercury and Phaedra; and the petulant interested 'Queen of Gipsies,' as her lover terms her, is a bad paramour for the God of Thieves. In the scenes of a higher cast Dryden far outstrips both the French and Roman poets. The sensation to be expressed is not that of sentimental affection, which

the good father of Olympus was not capable of feeling; but love of that grosser and subordinate kind, which prompted Jupiter in his intrigues, has been by none of the ancient poets expressed in more beautiful verse than that in which Dryden has clothed it, in the scenes between Jupiter and Alcmena."

Dr Hawkesworth remodelled and castrated Dryden's *Amphitryon*, in which altered form it was acted at the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane and Covent-Garden. "Dryden's comedy," says the Doctor, "is so tainted with the profaneness and immodesty of the times in which he wrote, that the present time, however selfish and corrupt, has too much regard to external decorum to permit the representation of it upon the stage, without drawing a veil, at least, over some parts of its deformity." It is further stated, in the preface to Dr Hawkesworth's alteration, "In the scene between Sosia and Mercury, in the second act, Amphitryon is supposed to have sent a buckle of diamonds by Sosia as a present to Alcmena; for Sosia first asks Mercury if *Amphitryon did send a certain servant with a present to his wife;* and soon after asks him, 'What that present was;' which, by Mercury's answer, appears to be the diamond buckle. Yet in the scene between Amphitryon and Alcmena in the third act, when Alcmena asks him, as a proof of having been with her before, from whose hands she had the jewel, he cries out, 'This is amazing; have I already given you those diamonds? *the present I reserved* ——.' And instead of supposing that Sosia had delivered them as part of his errand, which he pretended he could not execute, he appeals to him for their being in safe custody, reserved to be presented by himself. This is an inconsistency peculiar to Dryden, for neither Plautus nor Molière anywhere mention the present to have been sent by Sosia. There is another inaccuracy of the same kind which occurs both in Plautus and Molière. It appears, in the second scene of the second act, that one part of Sosia's errand was to give Alcmena a particular account of the battle; and Sosia's account of his being prevented is so extravagant and absurd that Amphitryon cannot believe it; yet, when Alcmena, in the third scene, asks Amphitryon how she came to know *what he had sent Sosia to tell her*, Amphitryon, in astonishment, seems to admit that she could know these particulars *only from himself*, and does not consider her question as a proof that Sosia had indeed delivered his message, though, for some reasons, he had pretended the contrary, and forged an incredible story to account for his neglect. As it would have been so much more natural for Amphitryon to have supposed that Sosia had told him a lie, than that Alcmena had by a miracle learned what only he and Sosia could tell her, without seeing either of them; this inaccuracy is removed by introducing such a supposition, and making the dialogue correspond with it. In the second Act, Jupiter, in the character of Amphitryon, leaves Alcmena with much reluctance, pretending haste to return to the camp, and great solicitude to keep his visit to her a secret from Thebans; yet

when he appears again in the third Act, which he knew would be taken for the third appearance of Amphitryon, he does not account for his supposed second appearance at the return of the real Amphitryon, just after his departure, which seems to be absolutely necessary to maintain his borrowed character consistently; and without dropping the least hint of his being no longer solicitous to conceal his excursion from the camp, he sends Sosia to invite several of the citizens to dinner. Many other inaccuracies less considerable and less apparent have been removed, which it is not necessary to point out: whoever shall think it worth while diligently to co pare the play as it stood, with the altered copy, can scarce fail to see the reason of the alterations as they occur. It must be confessed that there are still many things in Amphitryon, which, though I did not obliterate, I would not have written; but I think none of these are exceptionable in a moral view." Let us add to this, that the Doctor altered also some of Dryden's songs, and substituted others, which are very flat. In the Prologue he says:—

> "The scenes which Plautus drew, to-night we shew,
> Touch'd by Molière, by Dryden taught to glow.
> Dryden!—in evil days his genius rose,
> When wit and decency were constant foes:
> Wit then defil'd in manners and in mind,
> Whene'er he sought to please, disgrac'd mankind,
> Freed from his faults, we bring him to the fair."

All the imitations which English dramatists have made from Molière will be found in the Appendix.

A German littérateur, Heinrich von Kleist (1776-1811) has also written an *Amphitryon*, in which he freely imitates Molière. The great difference is in the conversation between Jupiter, as Amphitryon, and Alcmena, which, in the German author is full of a certain kind of mystic sentimentality, and in which Jove, disguised as Amphitryon, informs her that the real Amphitryon, who has visited her, is the father of gods and men.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PROLOGUE.

MERCURY. NIGHT.

IN THE COMEDY.

JUPITER, *in the form of Amphitryon.*
MERCURY, *in the form of Sosia.*
AMPHITRYON, *general of the Thebans.*
ARGATIPHONTIDAS, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, PAUSICLES, } *Theban captains.*
SOSIA, *Amphitryon's servant.*[2]
ALCMENA, *Amphitryon's wife.*
CLEANTHIS, *her maid, Sosia's wife.*

Scene—THEBES, BEFORE AMPHITRYON'S HOUSE.

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[2] This part was played by the author himself. In the inventory given by M. Soulié, and so often quoted, Molière's dress in the character of Sosia consists of: "the sleeves and the lower part of the theatrical classical cuirass (*tonnelet*) of green taffeta, with a small lace of fine silver, a chemisette of the same taffeta, two leggings of red satin, a pair of shoes, with tags, ornamented with silver lace, with a silk stocking of a peculiar kind of light green colour (*Céladon*), the festoons, the belt and a skirt, and a cap, embroidered with fine gold and silver."

AMPHITRYON.

PROLOGUE.

MERCURY, *on a cloud;* NIGHT, *drawn through the air by two horses.*[3]

Merc. Gently! charming Night, deign to stay a-while. Some help is wanted of you; and I have two words to say to you from Jupiter.

Night. Ah! it is you, Sir Mercury! who would have thought of you in such a position?

Merc. Upon my word, getting tired, and not being able to fulfil the different duties which Jupiter lays upon me, I quietly sat down on this cloud to await your coming.

Night. You are jesting Mercury; and you do not mean it; does it become the gods to say that they are tired?

Merc. Are the gods made of iron?

Night. I wot not; but it is meet to preserve continually the divine decorum. There are certain words the use of which lowers this sublime attribute, and which should be left to men, because they are undignified.

Merc. How easily you speak of it; and you have, fair charmer, a chariot, in which, like a careless great lady, you are drawn by two good horses wherever you like. But it is not the same thing with me, and I cannot, in my fatal destiny, bear the poets too great a grudge, for their extreme impertinence, in having, by an unjust law, of which they wish to keep up the custom, given to each god, for his behoof, a special conveyance, and have left me to go on foot, me, like a village messenger; I, who, as is well known,

[3] See Appendix, Note A.

am the famous messenger of the sovereign of the gods, in the skies and on the earth; and who, without exaggerating anything, stand more than any one else in need of the means of travelling about, on account of all the duties which he lays upon me.

Night. How can you help it? The poets do as they like. It is not the first stupidity which we have seen these gentlemen commit. But at any rate, your irritation against them is unreasonable, for the wings at your feet are due to their care.

Merc. Yes; but does one tire oneself less in going more quickly?

Night. Let us leave this, Sir Mercury, and come to the point.

Merc. It is Jupiter, as I have told you, who wishes the sombre favour of your cloak for a certain gallant adventure, with which a new love-affair provides him. His tactics are not new to you, I believe: he very often neglects the skies for the earth; and you are not ignorant that this master of the gods is fond of becoming humanised for mortal beauties, and has a hundred ingenious tricks to vanquish the most cruel. He has felt the darts of Alcmena's eyes; and whilst Amphitryon, her husband, commands the Theban troops on Becetia's plains, he has assumed his form, and under that disguise relieves his pains, in the possession of the sweetest pleasures. The condition of the wedded pair is propitious to his flame: Hymen has united them only a few days since; and the still young fire of their tender love has made Jupiter have recourse to this pretty artifice. In this case his stratagem has proved successful; but with many a cherished object a similar disguise would be of no use, and to assume the form of a husband is not everywhere a good means of pleasing.

Night. I admire Jupiter, and I cannot conceive all the disguises that come into his head.

Merc. In this way, he wishes to have a taste of all sorts of conditions; and it is not at all acting as a stupid god. From whatever point of view he may be regarded by

mortals, I would think very little of him if he never abandoned his redoubtable mien, and were always full of affectation, in the highest part of Heaven. In my opinion, there can be nothing more foolish than to be always imprisoned in one's grandeur; and, above all, a lofty rank becomes very inconvenient in the transports of amorous ardour. Jupiter, who, no doubt, is a good judge of pleasure, knows how to descend from the height of his supreme glory; and, to enter into everything that pleases him, he leaves his individuality behind him, and it is no longer Jupiter who appears.

Night. One might yet overlook seeing him descend from his sublime estate to enter into that of men, to enjoy all the transports of which their hearts are capable, and to accommodate himself to their jests, if, in the changes to which his disposition drives him, he would confine himself to human nature. But to see Jupiter as a bull, a serpent, a swan, or anything else, I do not think it nice, and am not at all astonished that it is sometimes talked about.

Merc. Let all the cavillers talk: such changes have a charm which surpasses their understanding. This god knows well enough what he is about there as elsewhere: and that, in the movements of their tender passions, the brutes are not so stupid as one would think.

Night. Let us return to the fair one whose favours he enjoys. If, by his stratagem, he finds that his passion is successful, what more can he wish, and what can I do?

Merc. That, to satisfy the desires of his enamoured soul, you should slacken the pace of your horses, to make of so delightful a night, the longest night of all; that you should allow more time to his transports, and that you should retard the break of day which must hasten the return of him whose place he takes.

Night. This is no doubt a nice employment, which the great Jupiter reserves for me! And an honourable name is given to the service required of me!

Merc. You are rather old-fashioned for so young a goddess! Such an employment has nothing degrading except

among people of low birth. When one has the happiness of being in a lofty rank, whatever is done is always well and good; and things change their names according to what one may be.

Night. You know more about such matters than I do; and I shall believe in your superior knowledge, and accept this employment.

Merc. Now, now, Madam Night, a little gently, I pray. In the world you have the reputation of not being so particular. In a hundred different climates you are made the confidant of many gallant adventures: and, to tell you my mind plainly, I believe that we have nothing with which to reproach each other.

Night. Let us drop these bickerings, and remain what we are. Let us not give mankind cause to laugh by telling each other the truth.

Merc. Farewell. I am going yonder on this business, promptly to doff the form of Mercury, to don the figure of Amphitryon's servant.

Night. I am going to make a stay in this hemisphere with my dark train.

Merc. Good day, Night.

Night. Farewell, Mercury.[4]

[*Mercury descends from his cloud; Night crosses the stage.*

[4] Molière got the primary idea of this Prologue from Plautus' *Amphitryon* (Act i., Scene 1), where Mercury addresses Night thus: "Go on, Night, as you've begun, and pay obedience to my father. In best style, the best of services are you performing for the best of beings; in giving this, you reap a fair return."

ACT I. SCENE I.

SOSIA, *alone.*

Who goes there? He? My fear increases at every step! Gentlemen, I am a friend to everyone. Ah! what extraordinary boldness to be abroad at such an hour as this! What a scurvy trick, my master, covered as he is with glory, plays me here! What! would he have me set out in such a dark night, if he had any love for his fellow-man! Could he not as well have waited till daylight, to send me to announce his return and the details of his victory? To what slavery is thy life subjected, Sosia! Our lot is much harder with the great than with the little. They will have it that everything in nature be compelled to be sacrificed to them. Night and day, hail, wind, danger, heat, cold, the moment they speak we must fly. Twenty long years of hard services avail us nothing with them. The slightest whim draws down their anger upon us. In spite of all this, our foolish hearts cling to the empty honour of remaining with them, and will be contented with the false notion, which all other people share, that we are happy.[5] In vain, reason calls us to retire; in vain our spite sometimes consents to this; their presence has too powerful an influence on our zeal, and the slightest favour of a caressing look re-engages us more firmly than ever. But at last, I perceive our house through the darkness, and my fear vanishes.[6] I must have some set speech for my

[5] Sosia expresses himself as a courtier of Louis XIV. Plautus' Sosia complains only of the harsh condition of a slave, but says nothing "of the honour of remaining" with the master.

[6] In Plautus' *Amphitryon*, Sosia is very much afraid of meeting some one, and of being beaten. Still, he seems in no hurry to arrive, for he utters a soliloquy of about two hundred lines. Molière makes Sosia perceive the house, and thus his fear vanishes.

mission. I owe to Alcmena some military sketch of the great battle which sent all our enemies to the right-about. But how the deuce am I to describe it, when I was not there? No matter, let us speak of cut and thrust, as if I had been an eye-witness. How many people tell of battles, from which they kept far enough away! In order to act my part with credit, I will rehearse it a little. This is supposed to be the room in which I enter as the bearer of despatches; and this lantern is Alcmena, whom I have to address.[7] [*He sets his lantern on the ground and addresses his speech to it.*] Madam, Amphitryon, my master and your husband, . . . (Good! that is a nice beginning!) whose thoughts are ever filled with your charms, has been pleased to choose me from amongst all to give you tidings of the success of his arms, and of his desire to be with you. "Ah! really, my good Sosia, I am heartily delighted to see you back again." Madam, you do me too much honour, and my lot is to be envied. (Well answered!) "How fares Amphitryon?" Madam, as a man of courage should, whenever an occasion offers for behaving with glory. (Capital! that is well conceived!) "When will he, by his charming return, satisfy my heart?" As quickly as he can, assuredly, Madam, but much less early than his heart desires. (Ah!) "But in what state has the war left him? What says he? What does he? Set my heart at rest." He says far less than he does, Madam, and makes his enemies tremble. (Plague! where do I get all these pretty speeches?) "What are

[7] The scene in which Sosia addresses the lantern is an imitation of a scene in the fifth fable of the third night of the *Piacevoli Notti* of Straparola; with this difference, that, in the Italian tale, the servant, who has killed the bull with the golden horns, in order to give those horns to his mistress, hangs his clothes upon a branch of a tree, and then addresses them in an explanatory speech, which he intends afterwards to deliver to his master, who has confided the bull to his guard.

the rebels doing? tell me, what is their present condition?" They could make no stand against us, Madam; we cut them to pieces, put their chief, Pterelas,[8] to death, took Telebos[9] by storm; and the whole port rings already with our prowess. "Ah! what success! ye gods! Who could ever have thought it? Tell me, Sosia, how it all occurred." Willingly, Madam; and without boasting. I can give you, very accurately, the details of this victory. Imagine, then, Madam, that Telebos is on this side. [*Sosia marks the places on his hand, or on the ground.*] It is a city really almost as large as Thebes. The river is, as it were, there. Our people encamped here; and that space here was occupied by our enemies. On a height, somewhere thereabout, was their infantry; and a little lower down, towards the right, their cavalry. After having addressed our prayers to the gods, and issued every order, the signal was given. The enemy, thinking to cut out work for us, divided their horse into three platoons; but we soon cooled their courage, and you shall see how. There, is our vanguard eager to be at work; there, stood the archers of our king, Creon; and here, was the main body of the army [*Some noise from without*] which was about to . . . Stay, the main body of the army is afraid; I hear some noise, methinks.[10]

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[8] Pterelas did not live in the time of Amphitryon, but was the son of Taphius, a son of a niece of Alcæus, the father of Amphitryon. Plautus and Molière have made the same mistake.

[9] Telebos was the capital of the island of Taphe, not far from Ithaca, on the coast of Acarnania.

[10] Plautus' Sosia gives a serious and detailed narrative of the battle; Molière's preserves the real comedy tone.

SCENE II.

MERCURY, SOSIA.[11]

Merc. [*In the form of Sosia, coming out of Amphitryon's house*] Under this guise which resembles him, let us drive away this babbler, whose unfortunate arrival might disturb the happiness which our lovers are enjoying together.

Sos. [*Not seeing Mercury*] My spirits revive a little, and after all, I think it was nothing. For fear of a sinister adventure, however, let us go and finish the conversation indoors.

Merc. [*Aside*] Unless you be stronger than Mercury, I shall prevent your doing so.

Sos. [*Without seeing Mercury*] This night seems to me inordinately long. Judging by the time I have been on the way, my master must have mistaken evening for morning, or fair Phœbus lies too long in bed through having taken too much wine.

Merc. [*Aside*] With what irreverence this lout speaks of the gods! My arm shall just now chastise well this insolence; and I shall have some real fun with him by stealing his name as well as his likeness.

Sos. [*Perceiving Mercury a little way off*] Ah! upon my word, I was right after all: it is all over with me, poor wretch! I perceive, before our house, a man, whose mien bodes me no good. To appear easy, I shall hum a little.[12]

[*He sings.*

Merc. What fellow is this, who takes the liberty to sing and to deafen me in this manner? [*As Mercury speaks, Sosia's voice grows gradually weaker*] Does he wish me to give him a drubbing?

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11 See Appendix, Note B.

12 Compare Nick Bottom in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (Act iii., Scene 1), saying, "I will sing that they shall hear I am not afraid."

Sos. [*Aside*] Assuredly that fellow has no love for music.[13]

Merc. For the last week, I have found no one whose bones I could break; my arm loses its strength in this idleness; and I am looking out for some back to regain my cunning.

Sos. [*Aside*] What the deuce of a fellow is this? My heart is big with mortal fear. But why should I tremble so? Perhaps the fellow is just as much afraid as I am, and speaks in that way to hide his fear underneath a pretended audacity. Yes, yes, let us not allow him to think us a goose. If I am not bold, let me try to appear so. Let us reason ourselves into courage; he is alone like me; I am strong, I have a good master, and there is our house.

Merc. Who goes there?

Sos. I.

Merc. Who, I?

Sos. I. [*Aside*] Courage, Sosia.

Merc. What is your condition in life, tell me?

Sos. To be a man, and to speak.

Merc. Are you master, or servant?

Sos. As the whim takes me.

Merc. Whither are your steps bent?

Sos. Where I intend to go.

Merc. Ah! this displeases me.

Sos. I am delighted to hear it.

Merc. Positively, by fair means or foul, I shall know from you, wretch, what you are doing, where you came from before day-break, whither you are going, and who you may be.

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[13] This dialogue is imitated from Plautus, except Sosia's remark about the fellow having no love for music.

Sos. I do good and ill by turns; I come hence; I go thither; I belong to my master.[14]

Merc. You show some wit, and you have a mind, I perceive, to assume with me the man of importance. I feel inclined, to make acquaintance, to give you a box on the ear with my own hand.

Sos. To me?

Merc. To you; and there it is for you, to make sure of it. [*Mercury slaps Sosia's face.*

Sos. Ho! ho! this is in earnest?

Merc. No, it is only for fun, and in answer to your jokes.

Sos. Zounds! friend, how you deal your blows about without one's saying anything to you.

Merc. These are the least of my blows; my little ordinary boxes on the ear.

Sos. Were I as hasty as you, we should make nice work of it.

Merc. All this is nothing as yet. We shall see something better anon; but to provide a little interval, let us continue our conversation.

Sos. I give up the game. [*Wishes to go.*

Merc. [*Stopping him*] Where are you going?

Sos. What does it matter to you?

Merc. I wish to know where you are going.

Sos. To get that door opened to me. Why do you detain me?

Merc. If you are impudent enough to go only near it, I shall shower down a storm of blows upon you.

Sos. What! you wish, by your threats, to prevent my entering our own house?

Merc. How! our house?

[14] Nearly the whole of this lively dialogue is partly imitated from Plautus.

Sos. Yes, our house.

Merc. O, the wretch! you belong to that house, you say?

Sos. Indeed I do. Is not Amphitryon the master of it?

Merc. Well! what does that prove?

Sos. I am his servant.

Merc. You!

Sos. I.

Merc. His servant?

Sos. Without a doubt.

Merc. The servant of Amphitryon?

Sos. Of Amphitryon, of him.

Merc. Your name is? . . .

Sos. Sosia.

Merc. Heh! what?

Sos. Sosia.

Merc. Harkee! do you know that, with my fist, I shall knock you down on the spot?

Sos. For what? What fury seizes you?

Merc. Tell me, who made you so rash as to assume the name of Sosia?

Sos. I, I do not assume it; I have had it all my life.

Merc. O what a horrible lie, and what extreme impudence! You dare to maintain that Sosia is your name!

Sos. Indeed I do; I maintain it, for the very good reason that the gods have so ordained it by their supreme decree, and that it lies not in my power to say nay, and to be any other than myself.

Merc. A thousand cudgel-strokes ought to be the reward of such effrontery.

Sos. [*Beaten by Mercury*] Justice, citizens! Help! I beseech you.

Merc. How, you hang-dog, you cry out!

Sos. You kill me with a thousand blows, and you do not wish me to cry out?

Merc. It is thus that my arm . . .

Sos. It is an unworthy action. You take advantage of the superiority which my want of courage gives you over me; and that is not fair. It is mere hectoring to wish to profit by the poltroonery of those whom we thrash. To beat a man who we know will not fight, is not a generous action; and to show courage against those who have none, is blamable.

Merc. Well! are you Sosia now? what say you?

Sos. Your blows have effected no metamorphosis in me; and all the change that I can find in the case is that I am Sosia beaten.

Merc. [*Threatening Sosia*] Again! A hundred fresh blows for this new impudence.

Sos. Pray, cease your blows.

Merc. Then cease your insolence.

Sos. Anything you please; I keep silence. The dispute is too unequal between us.

Merc. Are you Sosia still? say, wretch!

Sos. Alas! I am what you please: dispose of my fate entirely according to your wish; your arm has made you master of it.

Merc. Your name was Sosia, by what you said?

Sos. It is true, until now I thought the thing plain enough; but your stick has made me see that I was mistaken in the matter.

Merc. It is I who am Sosia, and all Thebes confesses it: Amphitryon has never had any other than me.

Sos. You, Sosia?

Merc. Yes, Sosia! and if any one plays tricks with him, let him look to himself.

Sos. [*Aside*] Heaven! must I thus renounce my own self, and see my name stolen from me by an impostor. How extremely fortunate it is for him that I am a coward, or else, 'sdeath! . . .

Merc. You are murmuring, I know not what, between your teeth.

Sos. No. But, in the name of the gods, give me leave to speak for one moment to you.

Merc. Speak.

Sos. But promise me, I pray, that there shall be no blows. Let us sign a truce.[15]

Merc. Proceed: go on, I grant you that point.

Sos. Who, tell me, put this fancy into your head? What good will it do you to take my name away from me? And, even were you a demon, could you, in short, prevent me from being myself, from being Sosia?

Merc. [*Lifting his stick*] How! Can you . . .

Sos. Ah! hold; we have discarded blows.

Merc. What! hangdog, impostor, rascal! . . .

Sos. As for names, call me as many as you like; these are slight wounds, and I am not angry at them.

Merc. You say you are Sosia?

Sos. Yes. Some nonsensical tale has been . . .

Merc. Now then, I break our truce, and take back my word.

Sos. No matter. I cannot annihilate myself for you, and stand a speech so very improbable. Is it in your power to be what I am? and can I cease to be myself? Did anyone ever hear of such a thing? And can one give the lie to a hundred convincing proofs? Do I dream? Am I asleep? Is my mind disturbed by some powerful transport? Do I not plainly feel that I am awake? Am I not in my right senses? Has not my master, Amphitryon, charged me to come hither to Alcmena his wife? Am I

[15] This dialogue is again followed from Plautus.

not to extol his love for her, and to give an account of his deeds against our enemies? Have I not just come from the harbour? Have I not a lantern in my hand? Have I not found you in front of our dwelling? Did I not talk to you in a perfectly kind manner? Do you not take an advantage of my cowardice, to hinder me from entering our house? Have you not spent your rage upon my back? Have you not belaboured me with blows? Ah! all this is but too real; and would to Heaven, it were less so! Cease therefore to insult a wretch's lot; and leave me to acquit myself of the calls of my duty.

Merc. Stop, or the least step brings down upon your back a thundering outbreak of my just wrath. All that you have mentioned just now is mine, except the blows.

Sos. This lantern knows how, my heart full of fear, I departed this morning from the vessel. Has not Amphitryon sent me to Alcmena, his wife, from the camp?

Merc. You have told a lie. It was I whom Amphitryon deputed to Alcmena, and who, at this moment, arrives from the Persian Port;[16] I, who come to announce the valour of his arm which gained us a complete victory, and slew the chief of our enemies. In short, it is I who assuredly am Sosia, son of Davus, an honest shepherd; brother to Harpage who died in a foreign country; husband to that prude Cleanthis, whose temper drives me mad; who has received a thousand lashes at Thebes, without ever saying aught about it; and who was formerly publicly marked on the back, for being too honest a man.[17]

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[16] According to Riley, Plautus is here guilty of an anachronism; for the "Portus Persicus," which was on the coast of Eubœa, was so called from the Persian fleet lying there on the occasion of the expedition to Greece, many ages after the time of Amphitryon.

[17] Among the ancients, marking with a red-hot iron upon the shoulder was unknown as a public punishment. In Plautus, Sosia says, that he has been whipped.

Sos. [*Quietly aside*] He is right. Unless one be Sosia, one cannot know all he says; and, amidst the astonishment which seizes upon me, I begin, in my turn, to believe him a little. In fact, now that I look at him, I perceive that he has my figure, my face, my gestures. Let me ask him some question, in order to clear up this mystery. [*Aloud*] What did Amphitryon obtain for his share of all the plunder taken from our enemies?

Merc. Five very large diamonds neatly set in a cluster, with which their chief used to adorn himself as a rare piece of workmanship.[18]

Sos. For whom does he intend such a rich present?

Merc. For his wife; and he wishes her to wear them.

Sos. But where is it placed at present, until it shall be brought?

Merc. In a casket sealed with the arms of my master.[19]

Sos. [*Aside*] He does not tell a single lie in any of his answers; and I begin really to be in doubt about myself. With me he is already, by sheer force, Sosia; and he might perhaps also be he by reason. And yet, when I touch myself and recollect, it seems to me that I am myself. Where shall I find some trustworthy light to clear up what I see? What I have done alone, and what no one has seen, cannot be known unless by myself. By that question I must astonish him; and that is enough to puzzle him, and we shall see. [*Aloud*] When they were fighting, what did you do in our tents; whither you ran alone to hide yourself?

Merc. From off a ham . . . .

Sos [*Quietly aside*] That is it!

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[18] In Plautus, Amphitryon receives a "golden goblet" for his share, which has become almost historical, because historians have mentioned it, and described its form.

[19] Arms were unknown to the ancients, for heraldry came in only with chivalry. But the ancients used signet rings upon which was engraved some peculiar sign.

Merc. Which I unearthed, I bravely cut two juicy slices, with which I stuffed myself nicely. And adding thereto a wine of which they are very chary, and the sight of which pleased me even before I tasted it, I imbibed some courage for our people who were fighting.

Sos. [*Softly aside*] This matchless proof concludes well in his favour; and, unless he were in the bottle, nothing is to be said against it.[20] [*Aloud*] From the proofs laid before me, I cannot deny that you are Sosia, and I acknowledge it. But, if you are he, tell me whom you wish me to be; for after all I must be somebody.

Merc. When I shall be no longer Sosia, you may be he, I agree to that; but while I am he, it will be your death to take such a fancy into your head.

Sos. All this confusion sets my wit on edge, and reason is contrary to what one sees. But there must be an end to this somehow or other; and the shortest way for me is to go in there.

Merc. Ah! you hangdog, you wish another taste of the stick.

Sos. [*Beaten by Mercury*] Ah! what is this? great gods! he strikes harder still; and my back will be sore for a month to come. Let me leave this devil of a fellow, and return to the harbour. O just Heavens, I have made a pretty embassy!

Merc. [*Alone*] At last I have made him fly; and, by this treatment, he has got his punishment for many of his deeds. But I perceive Jupiter, who, very politely, escorts the amorous Alcmena.

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[20] This is also taken from Plautus; only Mercury speaks there of "an earthen pot," and not of a bottle.

SCENE III.

JUPITER *under the form of Amphitryon,* ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.[21]

Jup. Forbid, dear Alcmena, the torch-bearers to approach. They afford me delight in beholding you; but might betray my coming hither, which had best remain concealed. My love, restrained by all these weighty cares with which the glory of our arms held me fettered, has stolen the moments which it has just given to your charms from the duties of my post. This theft, which my heart devoted to your beauty, might be blamed by the public voice; and the only witness whom I wish, is she who can thank me for it.

Alc. I take great interest, Amphitryon, in the glory which your illustrious exploits shed upon you; and the fame of your victory moves my heart in its most sensible part. But when I perceive that this fatal honour keeps away from me him whom I love, I cannot forbear, in my excessive tenderness, to bear it some ill-will, and even to cavil at the supreme order which makes you the Thebans' general. It is sweet after a victory to see the glory of one whom we love; but, among the perils inseparable from this glory, a fatal stroke, alas! may quickly come. With how many fears is our heart seized at the rumour of the slightest skirmish! In the horrors of such a thought, can we ever see aught with which to console ourselves for the threatened blow? And with whatever laurels the conqueror may be crowned, whatever share one may have in that high honour, is it worth that which it costs to a tender heart, which trembles every moment for him whom it loves?[22]

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21 See Appendix, Note C.

22 The Alcmena of Plautus utters sentiments more worthy of a Roman matron. This is what she says of her husband (Act ii., Scene 2): "This, at least, makes me happy, that he has conquered the foe, and has returned

Jup. I see nothing in you but what increases my passion; everything proves to my eyes a thoroughly enamoured heart; and it is, I own it, a charming thing, to find so much love in a beloved object. But, if I may dare to say so, one scruple troubles me in the tender sentiments which you show to me; and in order to relish them the more, my passion, dear Alcmena, would owe nothing to your duty. Let the favours, which I receive from you, be due to your love, and to my person only; and let not my position as your husband be the motive for their bestowal.

Alc. It is from that name, however, that the ardour which devours me holds its right to show itself; and I do not understand this new scruple with which your passion is perplexed.

Jup. Ah! the love and tenderness which I have for you exceeds also that of a husband; and in those sweet moments you are not aware of its delicacy: you do not understand that an enamoured heart is studiously intent upon a hundred trifles, and worries itself about the manner of being happy. In me, fair and charming Alcmena, you behold a lover and a husband; but, to speak frankly, it is the lover only I care for; and I feel that, when near you, the husband checks him. This lover, jealous of your affection to the last degree, wishes your love to abandon itself to him alone; and his passion desires nothing that the husband gives him. From the fountain-head, he wishes to obtain your love, and to owe nothing to the bonds of wedlock; nothing to a wearying

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home laden with glory. Let him be absent, if only with fame acquired he betakes himself home. I shall bear and ever endure his absence with mind resolved and steadfast; if only this reward is granted me, that my husband shall be hailed the conqueror in the warfare, sufficient for myself will I deem it. Valour is the best reward; valour assuredly surpasses all things: liberty, safety, life, property and parents, country too, and children, by it are defended and preserved. Valour comprises everything in itself: all blessings attend him in whose possession is valour."

duty which makes the heart ache, and by which the sweetness of the most valued favours is daily poisoned. In the scruples, in short, by which he is tormented, he wishes, in order to satisfy his delicacy, that you separate himself from that which is offensive to him, that the husband be only for your virtue; and that the lover shall have all the affection and tenderness of your heart, which is all gentleness.

Alc. Really, Amphitryon, you must be jesting, to talk in this manner; and I should be afraid, that if anyone heard you, you would be thought out of your right senses.

Jup. There is more sense in this discourse, Alcmena, than you think. But a longer stay would render me too guilty, and the time presses for my return to the port. Farewell. The harsh dictates of my duty tear me away from you for a while; but, fair Alcmena, try at least, I pray you, when you see the husband, to recollect the lover.

Alc. I do not separate that which the Gods unite, and husband and lover are very precious to me.

SCENE IV.

CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.[23]

Cle. [*Aside*] O Heaven! how sweet are the caresses of an ardently beloved husband! and how far is my wretch of a husband from all this tenderness.

Merc. [*Aside*] I must inform Night that she has but to furl all her sails, and the sun may now arise from his bed to put out the stars.

Cle. [*Stopping Mercury*] What! Is it thus that you leave me?

Merc. And how then? Would you wish me not to acquit myself of my duty, and follow Amphitryon's footsteps?

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[23] See Appendix, Note D.

Cle. But to separate from me in this abrupt fashion, you wretch.

Merc. A fine subject to be angry about! We have still so long to remain together!

Cle. But what! to go in such a brutal manner, without saying a single kind word to cheer me up.

Merc. Where the deuce would you have my brains fetch you this silly stuff from? Fifteen years of marriage exhaust one's discourse; and we have said all that we had to say to each other long ago.

Cle. Look at Amphitryon, you wretch; see how he shows his ardour for Alcmena: and after that, blush for the little passion that you display towards your wife.

Merc. Eh! good gracious, Cleanthis, they are still lovers. There comes a certain age when all this is done with; and what in those beginnings suits them well enough, would look very awkward in us, old married folks. It would be a pretty sight to see us, face to face, saying sweet things to each other.

Cle. What! perfidious wretch, am I past hoping that a heart might sigh for me?

Merc. No, I should be sorry to say so; but I have too grey a beard to dare to sigh, and I should make you die with laughter.

Cle. You hangdog, do you deserve the signal luck of having a virtuous woman like me for your wife?

Merc. Great Heavens! if anything you are too virtuous; all this merit is of little value to me. Be a little less an honest woman, and do not pester my brains so much.

Cle. How! do you find fault with me for being too virtuous?

Merc. A woman's sweet temper is her chief charm; and your virtue makes such a clamour that it never ceases deafening me.

Cle. You wish for a heart full of feigned tenderness, for those women with the laudable and pretty talent of knowing how to smother their husbands with caresses in order to make them swallow the existence of a gallant.

Merc. Upon my word, shall I tell you candidly? An ideal evil affects only fools; and I would take for my device: "Less honour and more quietness."

Cle. What! would you endure, without repugnance, that I should love a gallant without any shame?

Merc. Yes, if I were no longer pestered with your scolding, and if I could see you change your temper and your way. I would sooner have a convenient vice, than a worrying virtue. Farewell, Cleanthis, my dear soul; I must follow Amphitryon.

Cle. [*Alone*] Why has not my heart sufficient resolution to punish this infamous wretch! Ah, how it maddens me, in this instance, to be an honest woman!

ACT II. SCENE I.

AMPHITRYON, SOSIA.[24]

Amph. Come here, you gallows-bird, come here. Do you know, Master Scoundrel, that your talk is enough for me to knock you down, and that my anger only waits for a stick to beat you as I wish?

Sos. If you take it in that strain, Sir, I have nothing more to say; and you will be always in the right.

Amph. What, you wretch! you wish to foist upon me as truths stories which I know to be impossibly extravagant?

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[24] See Appendix, Note E.

Sos. No: I am the servant, and you are the master; it shall be just as you wish it, Sir.

Amph. Come, I will suppress the anger that is burning within me, and listen at length to the details of your mission. I must clear up this confusion before seeing my wife. Collect yourself, consider well within yourself, and answer word for word to each question.

Sos. But for fear of making a mistake, tell me beforehand, if you please, in what manner you wish this matter explained. Shall I speak, Sir, according to my conscience, or in the manner usually employed when addressing the great? Must I tell the truth, or am I to be complaisant?

Amph. No; I shall only compel you to give me a very straightforward account.

Sos. Very well. That is sufficient, leave it to me; you have only to question me.

Amph. Upon the order which I lately gave you . . .

Sos. I set out, the skies veiled with a black crape, swearing strongly against you under this vexatious martyrdom, and cursing twenty times the order of which you speak.

Amph. How so, you scoundrel!

Sos. Sir, you have only to say the word, and I shall tell lies, if you wish.

Amph. That is how a servant shows his zeal for us! No matter. What happened to you on the road?

Sos. To have a mortal fright at the slightest object that I saw.

Amph. Poltroon!

Sos. Nature has her whims in forming us; she bestows on us various inclinations; some find a thousand delights in exposing themselves: I find them in keeping myself safe.

Amph. When you reached the house . . .

Sos. I wished to rehearse a little before the door, in

what strain and in what manner I would give a glorious account of the battle.

Amph. What then ?

Sos. Some one came to disturb and embarrass me.

Amph. Who ?

Sos. Sosia ; another I, jealous of your orders, whom you sent from the port to Alcmena, and who has as full knowledge of our secrets as I who speak to you.

Amph. What tales !

Sos. No, Sir, it is the plain truth : this I, sooner than I, found himself at our house ; and I swear to you, Sir, that I was there before I had arrived.

Amph. Whence proceeds, I pray you, this confounded nonsense ? Is it a dream ? is it drunkenness ? aberration of mind, or a bad joke ?

Sos. No, it is the thing as it is, and not at all an idle tale. I am a man of honour, I give you my word ! and you may believe it, if you please. I tell you that, believing to be but one Sosia, I found myself two at our house ; and that of these two I's, jealous of each other, one is at home, and the other is with you ; that the I whom you see here, tired to death, found the other I fresh, jovial, and active, and having no anxiety but to fight and break bones.

Amph. I must be, I confess, of a temper very staid, very calm, and very gentle, to allow a servant to entertain me with such nonsense !

Sos. If you put yourself in a passion, no more conference between us ; you know all is over at once.

Amph. No, I will listen to you without excitement ; I promised it. But tell me in sober conscience, is there any shadow of probability in this new mystery which you have just been telling me ?

Sos. No ; you are right, and the affair must appear to

everyone past belief. It is an incomprehensible fact, an extravagant, ridiculous, irksome tale: it shocks common sense; but it is not the less a fact.

Amph. How can a man believe it, unless he be bereft of his senses?

Sos. I did not believe it myself without the utmost difficulty. I thought myself touched in my mind to believe myself two, and for a long time I treated this other self as an impostor: but he forced me at last to recognise myself; I saw that it was I, without the least stratagem; from head to foot he is exactly like me—handsome, a noble mien, well favoured, charming manners; in short, two drops of milk are not more alike; and were it not that his hands are somewhat too weighty, I should be perfectly satisfied about it.

Amph. With how much patience I must arm myself! But after all, did you not go into the house?

Sos. That is good, go in! He! In what way? Did I ever wish to listen to reason? and did I not forbid myself to enter our door?

Amph. How?

Sos. With a stick, of which my back feels still the smarting pain.

Amph. You have been beaten?

Sos. Indeed I have.

Amph. And by whom?

Sos. By myself.

Amph. You, beat yourself?

Sos. Yes, I; not the I that is here, but the I from the house, who strikes like four.

Amph. Heaven confound you for talking to me thus!

Sos. I am not joking: the I whom I met just now has great advantages over the I who is speaking to you. He has a strong arm and a lofty courage; I have had

proofs of it; and this devil of an I has thrashed me properly; he is a fellow who does impossible things.

Amph. Let us have done. Have you seen my wife?

Sos. No.

Amph. Why not?

Sos. For a sufficiently strong reason.

Amph. Who hindered you, rascal? Explain yourself.

Sos. Must I repeat the same thing twenty times to you? I, I tell you, this I stronger than I; this I who, by force, took possession of the door; this I who made me decamp; this I who wishes to be the only I; this I jealous of myself; this valiant I, whose anger showed itself to this cowardly I; in short, this I who is at home; this I who has shown himself my master; this I who has racked me with blows.[25]

Amph. His brain must be disturbed by having had too much drink this morning.

Sos. May I be hanged if I have had anything but water! You may believe me on my oath.

Amph. Then your senses must have been asleep, and some bewildering dream has shown you all these confused fancies which you foist upon me for truths.

Sos. As little as the other. I have not been asleep, and do not even feel inclined for it. I am speaking to you wide-awake; I was quite wide-awake this morning, upon my life, and quite wide-awake was also the other Sosia, when he belaboured me so well.

Amph. Follow me; I command you to be silent: You have wearied my mind enough; and I must be the veriest fool to have the patience to listen to the nonsense which a servant utters.

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[25] In Plautus, Sosia, when interrogated by Amphitryon, who has been beating him, replies also, "I myself, who am now at home, beat me myself."

Sos. [*Aside*] Every discourse is nonsense coming from an obscure fellow. If some great man were to say the same things, they would be exquisite words.

Amph. Let us go in without waiting any longer. But here comes Alcmena in all her charms. Doubtless she does not expect me at this moment, and my arrival will surprise her.

SCENE II.

ALCMENA, AMPHITRYON, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.[26]

Alc. [*Without seeing Amphitryon*] Come, Cleanthis, let us approach the gods, and offer up our homages for my husband, and render them thanks for the glorious success, of which Thebes, by his arm, reaps the advantage. [*Perceiving Amphitryon*] O ye gods!

Amph. Heaven grant that victorious Amphitryon may be once more met with pleasure by his wife! And that this day may be propitious to my passion, and restore you to me with the same affection! May I find as much fondness as my heart brings back to you!

Alc. What! returned so soon?

Amph. Truly, this is, in this instance, to give me but a sorry proof of your affection: and this, "What! returned so soon," is hardly the language on such an occasion of a heart truly inflamed with love. I presumed to flatter myself that I had stayed away from you too long. The expectation of an ardently longed for return invests each moment with excessive length; and the absence of what we love, however short, is always too long.

Alc. I do not see . . .

Amph. No, Alcmena, we measure the time in such cases by our own impatience; and you count the moments of

[26] See Appendix, Note F.

absence as one who does not love. When we really love, the least separation kills us; and the one whom we delight to see never comes back too soon. I confess that my fond affection has reason to complain at your reception; and I expected different transports of joy and tenderness from your heart.

Alc. I am at a loss to understand on what you found the words which I hear you speak; and if you complain of me, I do not know in good truth what would needs satisfy you. It seems to me that last night, at your happy return, I showed a sufficiently tender joy, and repaid your proofs of affection by everything which you had reason to expect from my love.

Amph. How?

Alc. Did I not show plainly enough the sudden ecstacies of a perfect joy! And can a heart's transports be better expressed at the return of a husband who is tenderly loved?

Amph. What is it you tell me?

Alc. That even your affection showed an incredible joy at my reception; and that, having left me at the break of day, I do not see that my surprise at this sudden return is so much to blame.

Amph. Has some dream last night, Alcmena, anticipated in your fancy the reality of my return, which I hastened; and having, perhaps, used me kindly in your sleep, does your heart imagine my love sufficiently repaid?

Alc. Has some disease in your mind, Amphitryon, by its malignity, obscured the truth of last night's return? and as to the tender welcome I gave you, does your heart pretend to rob me of all my honest affection?

Amph. Methinks this disease with which you entertain me is somewhat strange.

Alc. It is the only thing one can give in exchange for the dream of which you talk to me.

Amph. Unless by a dream, one can certainly not excuse what you tell me now.

Alc. Unless by a disease which troubles your mind, one cannot justify what I hear from you.

Amph. Let us have done with this disease for a moment, Alcmena.

Alc. Let us have done with this dream for a moment, Amphitryon.

Amph. As to the subject in question, the jest may be carried too far.

Alc. Undoubtedly ; and, as a sure proof of it, I begin to feel somewhat moved.

Amph. It is in this way then that you wish to try to make amends for the welcome of which I complained ?

Alc. And you wish to try to divert yourself by this feint ?

Amph. For Heaven's sake ! let us cease this, I pray you, Alcmena, and let us talk seriously.

Alc. It is carrying the jest too far, Amphitryon ; let let us end this raillery.

Amph. What ! dare you maintain to my face that I was seen at this spot before this hour ?

Alc. What ! have you the assurance to deny that you came hither yesterday towards evening ?

Amph. I ! I came yesterday ?

Alc. Undoubtedly ; and, just before the break of day, you went away again.

Amph. [*Aside*] Heavens ! was ever such a debate as this heard of ! And who would not be astonished at all this ? Sosia !

Sos. She has need of half-a-dozen grains of hellebore,[27] Sir ; her brain is turned.

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[27] See Vol. I., page 301, note 26.

Amph. Alcmena, in the name of all the gods, this discourse will have strange consequences! Recollect yourself a little better, and reflect upon what you say.

Alc. I am indeed seriously reflecting; and all the inmates of the house witnessed your arrival. I do not know what motive makes you act thus; but if the thing had need of proof, if it were true that one could not recollect such a thing, from whom, but yourself, could I hold the news of the latest of all your battles, and the five diamonds worn by Pterelas, plunged into eternal night by the force of your arm? What surer proof could one wish?

Amph. What! have I already given you the cluster of diamonds which I had for my share, and which I intended for you?

Alc. Assuredly it is not difficult to convince you thoroughly of it.

Amph. And how?

Alc. [*Pointing to the cluster of diamonds at her girdle*] Here it is.

Amph. Sosia!

Sos. [*Taking a casket from his pocket*] She is jesting, and I have it here. The feint is useless, Sir.

Amph. [*Examining the casket*] The seal is unbroken?

Alc. [*Presenting the diamonds to Amphitryon*] Is it an illusion? There. Will you think this proof strong enough?

Amph. O Heaven! O just Heaven!

Alc. Come, Amphitryon, you are joking with me by acting in this way; and you ought to be ashamed of it.

Amph. Break this seal quickly.

Sos. [*Having opened the casket*] Upon my word, it is empty. It must have been abstracted by witchcraft, or else it must have come by itself, without a guide, to her whom it knew that it was intended to adorn.

Amph. [*Aside*] Ye gods, whose power directs all things, what is this adventure, and what can I augur from it at which my passion startles not?

Sos. [*To Amphitryon*] If she speaks the truth, we share the same fate, and like me, Sir, you are double.[28]

Amph. Hold your tongue.

Alc. What is there to be so much surprised at? and whence this great emotion?

Amph. [*Aside*] O Heaven! what strange confusion! I see supernatural incidents, and my honour fears an adventure which my senses do not understand.

Alc. Do you still think to deny your sudden return, when you have so sensible a proof of it?

Amph. No; but be so kind, if it be possible, to relate to me what happened at this return.

Alc. Since you ask an account of the matter, you still wish to insinuate that it was not you?

Amph. Pray, pardon me; but I have a certain reason for asking you to relate it.

Alc. Have the important affairs which may occupy your mind, made you so soon lose the remembrance of it?

Amph. Perhaps so: but, in short, you would oblige me by telling me the whole story.

Alc. The story is not long. I advanced towards you full of fond surprise; I embraced you tenderly, and more than once testified my joy.

Amph. [*Aside*] Ah! I could have done without so sweet a welcome.

Alc. You first made me this valuable present, destined for me from the conquered plunder. Your heart vehemently unfolded to me all the fire of your passion, and the carking

[28] In *Plautus* (Act ii. Scene 2) Sosia says: "You have brought forth another Amphitryon, I have brought forth another Sosia; now if the goblet has brought forth a goblet, we have all produced our doubles."

cares which had kept it enchained, the joy of seeing me again, the pangs of absence, all the trouble caused by your impatience to return; and never, on similar occasions, did your love seem to me so tender and so passionate.

Amph. [*Aside*] Can one be more exquisitely tortured to death!

Alc. As you may well believe, all these transports, all this tenderness did not displease me; and if I must confess it, my heart, Amphitryon, found a thousand charms in them.

Amph. What then, pray?

Alc. We interrupted each other with a thousand fond enquiries. The repast was served. We supped by ourselves; and the supper over, we retired to bed.

Amph. Together?

Alc. Assuredly. What a question is that?

Amph. [*Aside*] Ah; this is the most cruel blow of all, and of which my jealous passion trembles to assure itself.

Alc. Whence comes, at this word, so deep a blush? Have I done any harm in sleeping with you?

Amph. No, to my great grief, it was not I; and whosoever says that I came hither yesterday, tells, of all falsehoods, the most horrible.

Alc. Amphitryon!

Amph. Perfidious woman!

Alc. Ah! what outburst is this!

Amph. No, no, no more fondness, no more respect: this misfortune puts an end to all my firmness; and my heart at this fatal moment, breathes only fury and revenge.

Alc. And on whom would you be revenged? and what want of faith makes you treat me now as a criminal?

Amph. I know not, but it was not I; and this is a despair which renders me capable of anything.

Alc. Away, unworthy husband, the fact speaks for itself, and the imposture is frightful. This is taking too

great an advantage of me, and it is too much to condemn me for faithlessness. If, in this confused outburst, you are seeking a pretext for breaking the nuptial bonds which hold me enchained to you, all these excuses are superfluous, for I am fully determined that this very day all our bonds shall be dissolved.[29]

Amph. After the disgraceful insult, which has been revealed to me, it is what, no doubt, you should prepare for: it is the least that can be expected; and things may perhaps not rest there. The dishonour is certain, my misfortune is plainly revealed to me, and my love endeavours in vain to conceal it from me; but I am as yet unacquainted with the particulars, and my just wrath demands to be enlightened. Your brother can openly vouch for it that I did not leave him until this morning: I am going to seek him, in order that I may confound you about this return which is falsely imputed to me. Afterwards, we shall penetrate to the bottom of a mystery unheard of until now; and, in the transports of a righteous wrath, woe be to him who has betrayed me!

Sos. Sir . . .

Amph. Do not accompany me, but wait here for me.

Cle. [*To Alcmena*] Must I . . .

Alc. I can attend to nothing: leave me alone, and follow me not.[30]

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[29] In Plautus, when the real Amphitryon comes back, Alcmena expresses her astonishment at his unexpected return; but when her husband loads her with reproaches, she replies, like a true Roman matron, I have brought you "that which is called a dowry, I do not deem the same my dowry; but chastity, and modesty, and subdued desires, fear of the Gods, and love of my parents, and concord with my kindred; to be obedient to yourself, and bounteous to the good, ready to aid the upright." In Molière, Alcmena is the young loving Frenchwoman.

[30] This scene, which is really the principal one of the comedy, is wholly taken from Plautus.

SCENE III.

CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.[31]

Cle. [*Aside*] Something must have disordered his brain; but the brother will immediately put an end to this quarrel.

Sos. [*Aside*] This is a sufficiently severe blow for my master; and his adventure is cruel. I very much fear something of the same kind for myself, and I will, very gently, explain myself to her.

Cle. [*Aside*] Let us see whether he will so much as speak to me! But I will let nothing appear.

Sos. [*Aside*] These things are often annoying to know, and I tremble to ask her. Would it not be better, for safety's sake, to remain altogether ignorant of what may be the truth? Yet, at all events, I must try and find out. I cannot help doing so. One of the weaknesses of human nature is curiosity to learn things which it would not like to know. May Heaven preserve you, Cleanthis!

Cle. Ah! you dare to come near me, you wretch?

Sos. Great Heaven! what ails you? You are always in a temper, and you get angry about nothing!

Cle. What do you call about nothing? Say.

Sos. I call about nothing what is called about nothing in verse as well as prose; and nothing, as you well know, means nothing, or at least very little.

Cle. I do not know what prevents my scratching your eyes out, infamous wretch, and teaching you how far the anger of a woman can go.

Sos. Hullo! Whence comes this furious outburst?

Cle. What! then you reckon as nothing what you have done to me?

Sos. What?

Cle. What! you pretend to be innocent? Is it by the

[31] See Appendix, Note G.

example of your master that you will say that you did not return here ?

Sos. No, I know the contrary too well ; but I shall not be cunning with you. We had drunk of I do not know what wine, which made me forget all that I might have done.

Cle. You imagine, perhaps, to excuse yourself by this trick . . .

Sos. No, seriously, you may believe me. I was in a condition in which I may have done things for which I should be sorry, and of which I have no recollection.

Cle. You do not at all remember the manner in which you treated me when you came from the port ?

Sos. Not in the least. You had better give me an account of it : I am just and sincere, and would condemn myself if I am wrong.

Cle. How ! Amphitryon having warned me, I sat up until you came ; but I never beheld such coldness : I had to remind you of your having a wife ; and when I wished to kiss you, you turned away your head, and presented your ear.

Sos. Good !

Cle. What do you mean by good ?

Sos. Good Heavens ! You do not know why I talk thus, Cleanthis. I had been eating garlic, and, like a well-behaved man, did quite right in turning my breath a little away from you.

Cle. I gave you to understand the tenderness of my heart ; but you were as deaf as a post to all that I said ; and not a kind word passed your lips.

Sos. Courage !

Cle. In short, notwithstanding my advances, my chaste flame found nothing in you but ice ; and I felt disappointed to receive no response from you, even so far as to refuse to

take your place in bed, which the laws of wedlock oblige you to occupy.

Sos. What! did I not go to bed?

Cle. No, you sneak.

Sos. Is it possible?

Cle. Wretch, it is but too true. Of all affronts this is the greatest; and, instead of your heart making amends for it this morning, you separated from me with words of undisguised contempt.

Sos. Bravo, Sosia!

Cle. Eh, what! This is the effect of my complaint! You laugh at this pretty piece of work!

Sos. How satisfied I am with myself!

Cle. Is this the way to express your regret for such an outrage?

Sos. I should never have believed that I could so well control myself.

Cle. Far from condemning yourself for such perfidious behaviour, you show your joy for it in your face!

Sos. Good gracious! not so fast! If I appear to be joyous, think that I have a strong inward reason for it, and that, without thinking of it, I never did better than in behaving to you in such a way just now.

Cle. Are you making fun of me, you wretch?

Sos. No, I am speaking frankly to you. In the condition in which I was, I had a certain fear, which, by your words, you have dissipated. I was very apprehensive, and feared that I had committed some foolishness with you.

Cle. What is this fear? and let us know wherefore.

Sos. The doctors say that, when one is drunk, one should abstain from one's wife, and that, in that state there can be no other result than children who are dull, and who cannot live. Reflect, if my heart had not armed itself with coldness, what inconveniences might have followed!

Cle. I do not care a pin for doctors, with their insipid arguments. Let them give rules to the sick, without wishing to govern people who are in good health. They meddle with too many affairs in pretending to put a curb upon our chaste desires; and in addition to the dog-days, they give us, besides their severe rules, a hundred cock-and-bull stories into the bargain.

Sos. Gently.

Cle. No. I maintain that theirs is a wrong conclusion; those reasons emanate from crack-brained people. Neither wine nor time can be fatal to the performance of the duties of conjugal love; and the doctors are asses.

Sos. I beseech you, moderate your rage against them; they are honest people, whatever the world may say of them.

Cle. You are altogether in the wrong box; your submission is in vain; your excuse will not pass; and sooner or later I will pay you out, between ourselves, for the contempt which you show me every day. I keep in mind all the particulars of our conversation, and I shall try to profit by the liberty which you allow me, you cowardly and perfidious husband.

Sos. What?

Cle. You told me just now, you mean wretch, that you would freely consent that I should love another.

Sos. Ah! as for that, I am wrong. I retract; my honour is too much concerned. You had better beware of giving way to that passion.

Cle. If I can, however, but once make my mind up to it . . .

Sos. Let us suspend this conversation for a little. Amphitryon returns, who seems quite contented.

SCENE IV.

JUPITER, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

Jup. [*Aside*] I shall take this opportunity of appeasing Alcmena, of banishing the grief in which her heart wishes to indulge, and, under the pretext that brings me hither, of giving my passion the sweet pleasure of reconciling myself with her. [*To Cleanthis*] Alcmena is up stairs, is she not?

Cle. Yes; full of uneasiness she seeks solitude, and has forbidden me to follow her.

Jup. Whatever prohibition she may have made does not apply to me.

SCENE V.

CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

Cle. He has soon got over his grief, from what I can see.

Sos. What say you, Cleanthis, to this cheerful mien, after his terrible quarrel?

Cle. That we would do well to send all the men to the devil, and that the best of them is not worth much.

Sos. These things are said in a passion; but you are too much taken up with the men; and, upon my word, you would all look very glum, if the devil should carry us all off.

Cle. Indeed . . .

Sos. Hush. Here they come.

SCENE VI.

JUPITER, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.[32]

Jup. Alas! Do you wish to drive me to despair? Stay, fair Alcmena.

Alc. No, I cannot stay with the author of my grief.

Jup. I entreat you!

[32] See Appendix, Note H.

Alc. Leave me.

Jup. What . . .

Alc. Leave me, I tell you.

Jup. [*Softly, aside*] Her tears touch me to the heart, and her grief saddens me. [*Aloud*] Allow my heart to . . .

Alc. No, do not follow me.

Jup. Whither would you go?

Alc. Where you shall not be.[33]

Jup. That would be a vain attempt on your part. I am attached to your beauty by too tight a bond to be separated for one moment from it. I shall follow you everywhere, Alcmena.

Alc. And I shall fly from you everywhere.

Jup. I am very dreadful, then!

Alc. More than I can express, to me. Yes, I look upon you as a frightful monster, a cruel, furious monster, whose approach is to be feared; as a monster to fly from everywhere. The sight of you gives me incredible pain; it is a torment that overwhelms me; and I see nothing under Heaven of what is frightful, horrible, odious, which would not be to me more bearable than you.

Jup. This is, alas! what your own mouth says.

Alc. I have much more in my heart; and it is but too sorry that it cannot find words to express it all.

Jup. And what has my passion done to you, Alcmena, that I should be looked upon by you as a monster.

Alc. Ah! just Heavens! and he can ask that? Is it not enough to drive one distracted?

Jup. Ah! in a gentler spirit . . .

Alc. No; I wish neither to see nor to hear anything of you.

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[33] These two lines are also found, with some slight alteration, in the sixth Scene of the second Act of *Don Garcia of Navarre*. (See Vol. I., page 344).

Jup. Have you the heart to treat me thus! Is this the tender love which was to last so long, when I came hither yesterday?

Alc. No, no, it is not; and your cowardly insults have willed it otherwise. It exists no longer, this passionate and tender love; you have cruelly destroyed it in my heart by a hundred piercing wounds. In its place stands an unbending wrath, a keen resentment, an invincible contempt, the despair of a heart justly incensed, which intends to hate you for this grievous affront, as much as it intended to love you; and which means to hate as much as possible.

Jup. Alas! how little strength your love must have had, if it can be destroyed by so small a matter! Must that which was only play, occasion a divorce? and is there any occasion to be so angry at a joke?

Alc. Ah! it is just this at which I am offended, and which my anger cannot forgive: I should have felt less hurt at the true outbursts of a fit of jealousy. Jealousy produces impressions of which the force often carries us away; and the most collected mind at such times finds it, without doubt, difficult enough to be answerable for its emotions. The violence of a heart which may have been mistaken has something to bring back a soul which it has offended, and in the love which gave it birth it finds, at least, in spite of all its violence, reasons for being excused. Those outbursts have always as an excuse against anger that cause which created them; and we easily forgive that which we cannot master. But, in wantonness of heart, to get into an uncontrollable fury, so deeply to injure, without cause, the tenderness and honour of a heart that dearly loves you, ah! is too cruel a blow, and one which my grief will never forget.

Jup. Yes, you are right, Alcmena; I must submit. This action is no doubt an odious crime; I do not pretend to defend it any longer: but allow my heart to exonerate itself in

your eyes, and to tell who is to blame for this insulting outburst. To make a frank avowal of it, Alcmena, it is the husband who has committed all the evil; it is the husband whom you must regard as guilty: the lover had no share in this brutal transport, and his heart is not capable of offending you. This heart has too much respect and tenderness for you ever to dream of it; and if it had the guilty weakness to do aught to wound you, he would pierce it with a hundred stabs before your face. But the husband has stepped out of that humble respect which should always be your due; by his harsh proceeding, the husband has shown himself, and he thought that the laws of marriage permitted him everything. Yes, it is no doubt he who is guilty towards you; he alone has maltreated your amiable person. Hate, detest the husband; I consent to it, and leave him to your mercy; but, Alcmena, preserve the lover from the resentment which such an offence raises in you; do not throw the effect of it on him; separate him somewhat from the guilty one; and, in order to be just, do not punish him for what he has not done.

Alc. Ah! all these subtleties are but frivolous excuses; and such language is only an annoyance to irritated minds. You use in vain this ridiculous prevarication. I distinguish nothing in him who offends me; everything becomes the object of my anger, and in its just violence, the husband and the lover are confounded. Both alike occupy my thoughts; and, by my wounded heart, are painted in the same colours to my eyes. Both alike are criminal; both alike have offended me; and both alike are odious to me.

Jup. Very well! since you wish it, I must then charge myself with the crime. Yes, you are right when you immolate me to your resentment, as a guilty victim. A too just anger against me sways you; and all this great wrath which you now display is making me suffer only lawful tor-

ments. It is right that you shun me, and that in your anger you threaten to fly from me everywhere. I must be an odious object to you; you must wish me a great deal of harm. My transgression in having offended your charming eyes surpasses every horror; it is a crime to offend men and gods; and in short, I deserve as punishment for my audacity that your hatred should employ its most furious darts against me. But my heart craves your mercy; to ask it I throw myself on my knees, and implore it in the name of the most brilliant flame of the tenderest love with which a soul can ever burn for you. If your heart, charming Alcmena, refuses me the pardon which I dare to request, a sudden stroke must deliver me by death from the harsh rigour of a penalty which I am unable to endure. Yes, this condition drives me to despair. Do not think, Alcmena, that loving as I do, your heavenly charms, I can live one day under your anger. The merciless length of those moments makes my afflicted heart already succumb beneath their deadly blows; and the cruel wounds of a thousand vultures are nothing compared to my violent grief. Alcmena, you have only to declare it to me if I have no pardon to hope for: this sword shall immediately, by a well aimed blow, pierce before your eyes the heart of a miserable wretch; that heart, that treacherous heart only too deserving of death, since it could offend so adorable a being; only too happy if, in descending to the dark regions, my death may appease your anger; and if, after this mournful day, it leaves in your soul no impression of hatred whilst remembering my love! That is all which I expect as a sovereign favour.

Alc. Ah! too cruel husband!

Jup. Say, speak, Alcmena.

Alc. Must I still feel kindness for you, and see you outrage me by so many insults?

Jup. Whatever resentment an outrage may cause, can

it hold out against the remorse of a really enamoured heart?

Alc. A heart full of passion would sooner expose itself to a thousand deaths, than offend the object of its love.

Jup. The more one loves, the less difficulty one feels . . .

Alc. No, speak no more about it; you deserve my hatred.

Jup. You hate me then?

Alc. I make every effort to do so, and I am vexed to think that all your insults cannot bring my heart even so far to indulge in that revenge.

Jup. But why this violence, since, to revenge yourself, I offer you my life? Pronounce its doom, and immediately I shall obey.

Alc. Can she who cannot hate desire your death?

Jup. And I, I cannot live unless you forego this anger that overwhelms me, and unless you grant me the favour of a pardon which I implore at your feet. [*Sosia and Cleanthis kneel likewise*] Decide upon one of the two quickly, either to punish, or to absolve me.

Alc. Alas! what I can resolve has appeared much clearer than I wish. My heart has too well betrayed me, for me to wish to keep up the wrath which you mention: to say that we cannot hate, is it not saying that we forgive?

Jup. Ah, charming Alcmena, I must in the excess of my joy . . .

Alc. Desist; I am angry with myself for so much weakness.[34]

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[34] In Plautus, the real Amphitryon threatens his wife with a divorce, and when Jupiter appears, under his semblance, and tries to make peace with Alcmena, she says, (Act iii., Scene 2):

Alc. By my virtue have I rendered these accusations vain. Since then I eschew conduct that's unchaste, I would wish to avoid imputations of unchastity. Fare you well, keep your own property to yourself, return me mine. Do you order any maids to be my attendants?

Jup. Go Sosia, and make haste; a sweet rapture charms my soul. See what officers of the army you can find, and invite them to dine with me. [*Softly, aside*] Mercury can supply his place, while he is away from this.

SCENE VII.

CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

Sos. Well! Cleanthis, you see how they arrange matters. Will you, in imitation of their example, make up a little peace between us, some little reconciliation?

Cleant. For the sake of your beautiful face,[35] truly! yes, to be sure.

Sos. What! you will not then?

Cleant. No.

Sos. It signifies little to me. So much the worse for you.

Cleant. Well, well, come back.

Sos. Zounds! no, I shall do nothing of the kind, and I shall be angry in my turn now.

Cleant. Get you gone, you wretch! leave me alone; one gets weary sometimes of being a virtuous woman.

Jup. Are you in your senses?

Alc. If you don't order them, let me go alone; chastity shall I take as my attendant. [*Going*]

Jup. Stay—at your desire, I'll give my oath that I believe my wife to be chaste. If in that I deceive you, then, thee, supreme Jupiter, do I entreat that thou wilt ever be angered against Amphitryon.

Alc. Oh! rather may he prove propitious.

[35] The original has *C'est pour ton nez, vraiment!* "It is for your nose, really."

ACT III. SCENE I.

AMPHITRYON, *alone.*

Yes, without doubt, fate conceals him purposely from me; and I am weary at last of trying to find him out. Nothing can be more cruel than my lot. Notwithstanding all my peregrinations, I cannot find him for whom I am looking; I meet all those for whom I do not look. A thousand cruel bores, who do not imagine themselves to be so, without knowing much of me, are driving me mad with their congratulations upon our exploits. In the cruel perplexity of the care that harasses me, they overwhelm me with their embraces, and their rejoicings only increase my uneasiness. In vain I endeavour to pass them by, to fly from their persecutions; their killing friendship [36] delays me everywhere; and whilst I reply to the ardour of their expressions by a nod of the head, I silently mutter a hundred curses upon them. Ah! how little we feel flattered by praise and honour, and all the fruits of a great victory, when in our inmost soul we are suffering a poignant grief! And how willingly would we barter all this glory to have the heart at rest! Every minute my jealousy harps upon my disgrace; and the more my mind reverts to it, the less am I able to disentangle its direful confusion. The theft of the diamonds does not surprise me; seals may be tampered with unperceived; but she will have it that yesterday I presented the gift to her personally, and this is what puzzles me most cruelly. Nature sometimes produces resemblances, of which some impostors have availed themselves to deceive; but it is preposterous that, under such a semblance, a man should pass himself off as a husband; and in such a case there are a thousand differences which a wife can easily detect. The

[36] The original has *tuante amitié;* I do not think that the word *tuante,* killing, is often used in this way in French.

wonderful effects of Thessalian magic have at all times been extolled ; but those famous stories, everywhere related of it, have always passed with me for idle tales ; it would be a hard fate indeed, that I, fresh from a complete victory, should be compelled to believe them at the cost of my own honour.[37] I will once more interrogate her upon this vexatious mystery, and find out if it be not some idle fancy that has imposed upon her disordered senses. Grant, O righteous Heavens, that this thought may prove true, and that, for my happiness, she may have lost her senses !

SCENE II.

MERCURY, AMPHITRYON.[38]

Merc. [*On the balcony of Amphitryon's house, without being seen or heard by him.*] Since love offers me no pleasures here, I will make myself some of a different nature ; and enliven my dull leisure by putting Amphitryon out of all patience. This may not be very charitable in a god ; but. I shall not trouble myself much about that ; I find, by my star, that I am somewhat disposed to malice.[39]

Amph. How comes it that at this hour the door is closed ?

Merc. Hullo ! gently. Who knocks ?

Amph. [*Not seeing Mercury*] I.

Merc. Who is I ?

Amph. [*Perceiving Mercury whom he takes for Sosia*] Ah ! open !

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[37] The Amphitryon of Plautus thinks his "doubleganger" to be a magician, a sorcerer, an enchanter ; but Molière's hero does not believe anything of the kind ; he is therefore in a much greater perplexity, and his situation is much more comical.

[38] See Appendix, Note I.

[39] Mercury, in astrology, "signifieth subtill men, ingenious, inconstant ; rymers, poets, advocates, orators, phylosophers, arithmeticians and busie fellowes."

Merc. Open indeed! And who may you be, to make such an uproar, and to speak in this strain?

Amph. What! do not you know me?

Merc. No, and have no wish to.

Amph. [*Aside*] Is every one losing his senses to-day? Has the distemper spread? Sosia! hullo, Sosia!

Merc. Well! Sosia, yes, that is my name; are you afraid of my forgetting it?

Amph. Do you see me clearly?

Merc. Clearly enough. What can possess your arm to make so great a noise? What do you want down there?

Amph. I, you hangdog! what do I want?

Merc. What do you not want then? speak, if you would have me understand you.

Amph. Wait, you wretch! I will come up there with a stick to make you understand, and to teach you properly to dare speak to me in this manner.

Merc. Gently! If you make the slightest attempt at disturbance, I shall send from this some messengers which you will not like.

Amph. Oh Heavens! has such insolence ever been heard of? Can one conceive it from a servant, from a beggar!

Merc. Well! what is the matter? Have you quite summed me up? Have you stared enough at me? How wide he opens his eyes; how wild he looks! If looks could bite, he would have torn me to shreds ere now.

Amph. I tremble at what you are bringing upon yourself with all these impudent remarks. What a terrible storm you are brewing for yourself! What a hurricane of blows will descend upon your back?

Merc. Look here, friend; if you do not make yourself scarce from this place, you may come in for some knocking about.

Amph. Ah! you shall know to your cost, you scoundrel, what it is for a servant to insult his master.

Merc. You, my master!

Amph. Yes, scoundrel! dare you deny me?

Merc. I recognise no other master but Amphitryon.

Amph. And who, except myself, can this Amphitryon be?

Merc. Amphitryon!

Amph. No doubt.

Merc. What illusion is this! Tell me in what honest tavern have you been muddling your brain?

Amph. What! again?

Merc. Was the wine of the right sort?

Amph. O Heavens!

Merc. Was it old or new?

Amph. What insults!

Merc. New is apt to get into one's head, if drunk without water.

Amph. Ah! certainly I shall tear out that tongue of yours.

Merc. Pass on, my good friend; believe me that no one here will listen to you. I have some respect for wine. Go on, get you away, and leave Amphitryon to the pleasures which he is enjoying.

Amph. What! is Amphitryon inside there?

Merc. Indeed he is; he himself, covered with the laurels of a signal victory, is with the fair Alcmena, tasting the sweets of a charming interview. They are indulging in the pleasures of a reconciliation, after a rather whimsical love-tiff. You had better beware how you disturb their sweet privacy, unless you wish him to punish you for your excessive rashness.

SCENE III.

AMPHITRYON, *alone.*

Ah! how strangely he has shocked my soul! and how cruelly disturbed my mind! And if matters stand as this wretch says, to what condition do I see my honour and affection reduced? Upon what am I to resolve? Am I to make it public or to keep it secret? And ought I, in my anger, to lock the dishonour of my house in my own breast, or spread it abroad. What! is there any need of consideration in so gross an insult? I have nothing to expect, and nothing to compromise; and all my uneasiness only ought to tend to my revenge.

SCENE IV.

AMPHITRYON, SOSIA, NAUCRATES *and* POLIDAS, *at the farther part of the stage.*[40]

Sos. [*To Amphitryon*] Sir, with all my diligence, all that I have been able to do is to bring you these gentlemen here.

Amph. Ah! you are here!

Sos. Sir.

Amph. Insolent, bold fellow!

Sos. What now?

Amph. I shall teach you to treat me thus.

Sos. What is the matter? what ails you?

Amph. [*Drawing his sword*] What ails me, wretch!

Sos. [*To Naucrates and Polidas*] Help, gentlemen! please come quickly.

Nau. [*To Amphitryon*] Oh, pray stop!

Sos. What have I done?

Amph. You ask me that, you rogue! [*To Naucrates*] No, let me satisfy my just anger.

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[40] See Appendix, Note J.

Sos. When they hang a fellow, they at least tell him why they do it.

Nau. [*To Amphitryon*] Please to tell us what his crime is.

Sos. Yes, gentlemen, please to insist upon that.

Amph. How! he just now had the audacity to shut the door in my face, and to add threats to a thousand insolent expressions! [*Wishing to strike him*] Ah! you scoundrel!

Sos. [*Dropping on his knees*] I am dead.

Nau. [*To Amphitryon*] Calm this passion.

Sos. Gentlemen!

Pol. [*To Sosia*] What is it?

Sos. Has he struck me?

Amph. No; he must have his deserts for the language he made free with just now.

Sos. How could that have been, when I was elsewhere occupied by your orders? These gentlemen here can bear witness that I have just invited them to dine with you.

Nau. It is true that he brought us this message, and would not leave us.

Amph. Who gave you that order?

Sos. You.

Amph. And when?

Sos. After your reconciliation. Amidst the transports of a soul delighted at having appeased Alcmena's anger.

[*Sosia gets up.*

Amph. O Heaven! every instant, every step adds something to my cruel martyrdom; and, in this fatal confusion, I no longer know what to believe or what to say.

Nau. All that he has just related to us, of what happened at your house, surpasses the natural so much, that before doing anything, and before flying into a passion, you ought to clear up the whole of this adventure.

Amph. Come; you may assist my efforts; and Heaven

brings you opportunely hither. Let us see what fortune may attend me to-day; let us clear up this mystery, and know our fate. Alas! I burn to learn it, and I dread it more than death.[41] [*Amphitryon knocks at the door of his house.*

SCENE V.

JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, SOSIA.[42]

Jup. What is this noise that obliges me to come down? And who knocks as if he were the master where I am?

Amph. Just gods! what do I see?

Nau. Heaven! what prodigy is this? What! two Amphitryons are here produced before us!

Amph. [*Aside*] My senses are struck dumb! Alas, I can no longer bear it, the adventure is at an end; my fate is clear enough, and what I behold tells me everything.

Nau. The more closely I view them, the more I find that they are like each other in everything.

Sos. [*Crossing to the side of Jupiter*] Gentlemen, this is the true one; the other is an impostor who deserves chastisement.

Pol. Certainly, this wonderful resemblance keeps my judgment in suspense.

Amph. We have been deceived too much by an execrable scoundrel; I must break the spell with this steel.

Nau. [*To Amphitryon, who has drawn his sword*] Stay!

Amph. Let me alone!

Nau. Ye gods! what would you do?

Amph. Punish the vile deceptions of an impostor!

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41 Plautus, who has this scene also, brings upon the stage only one witness—the pilot Blepharo; Molière introduces here two, and afterwards, in the eighth scene, two fresh witnesses.

42 See Appendix, Note K.

Jup. Gently, gently! There is very little need of passion; and when a man bursts out in such a manner, it leads us to suspect the goodness of his reasons.

Sos. Yes; it is a magician, who has a talisman[43] about him to resemble the masters of houses.

Amph. [*to Sosia*] I shall let you feel, for your share, a thousand blows for this abusive language.

Sos. My master is a man of courage, and he will not allow his people to be beaten.

Amph. Let me satiate my fury, and wash out my affront in this villain's blood.

Nau. [*Stopping Amphitryon*] We shall not suffer this strange combat of Amphitryon against himself.

Amph. What! does my honour receive this treatment from you! and do my friends embrace the cause of a rogue! Far from being the first to take up my revenge, they themselves prove an obstacle to my resentment!

Nau. What would you have us resolve at this sight, when between two Amphitryons all our friendship is in suspense? Should we now show our zeal to you, we fear making a mistake, and not recognising you. We see full well in you the image of Amphitryon, the glorious support of the Thebans' welfare; but we also see the same image in him, nor are we able to judge who is the real one. What we have to do is not doubtful, and the impostor ought to die by our hands; but this perfect resemblance conceals him between you two; and it is too hazardous a stroke to undertake without being certain. Let us ascertain gently on which side the imposture can be; and the moment we have disentangled the adventure, you will have no need to tell us our duty.

Jup. Yes, you are right, and this resemblance authorises you to doubt about both of us. I am not offended at see-

[43] The original has *un caractère.*

ing you wavering thus; I am more reasonable, and can make allowances for you. The eye can detect no difference between us, and I see that one can easily be mistaken. You do not see me show my anger, nor draw my sword; that is a bad method of clearing up this mystery, and I can find one more gentle and more certain. One of us is Amphitryon, and both of us may seem so to your eyes. It is for me to put an end to this confusion; and I intend to make myself so well known to everyone, that at the convincing proofs of who I may be, he himself shall agree about the blood from which I spring, and not have any further occasion to say anything. In the sight of all the Thebans I will discover to you the real truth; and the matter is, undoubtedly, of sufficient importance to require the circumstance of it being cleared up before every one. Alcmena expects from me this public testimony: her virtue, which is being outraged by the publicity of this disorder, demands justification, and I am going to take care of it. My love for her binds me to it; and I shall convene an assembly of the noblest chiefs, for an elucidation which her honour requires. While awaiting these desirable witnesses, pray, please to honour the table to which Sosia has invited you.

Sos. I was not mistaken, gentlemen; this word puts an end to all irresolution; the real Amphitryon is the Amphitryon who gives dinners.[44]

Amph. O Heavens! can I see myself humiliated much lower? What! must I suffer the martyrdom of listening to all that this impostor has just said to my face, and have my hands tied, whilst his discourse drives me furious!

Nau. [*To Amphitryon*] You complain wrongly. Allow us to await the elucidation which shall render resentments seasonable. I do not know whether he imposes upon us; but he speaks as if he had right on his side.

[44] This last saying is even now used as a proverb.

Amph. Go, weak friends, and flatter the imposture. Thebes has other friends, different from you; and I am going to find some who, sharing the insult done to me, will know how to lend their hand to avenge my just anger.

Jup. Well! I await them, and I shall know to decide the quarrel in their presence.

Amph. Scoundrel, you think perhaps to escape by these means; but nothing shall shield you from my revenge.

Jup. I shall not condescend to answer this insulting language at present; and by and by I shall be able to confound this rage with two words.

Amph. Not Heaven, not Heaven itself, shall shield you from it; and I shall dog your footsteps even unto hell.

Jup. There will be no need of that; and you shall soon see that I will not fly.

Amph. [*Aside*] Come, let us, before he gets out with them, make haste to assemble such friends as will second my vengeance, and who will come to my house to lend me assistance to pierce him with a thousand wounds.

SCENE VI.

JUPITER, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, SOSIA.

Jup. No ceremony, I beseech you; let us go quickly within doors.

Nau. Certainly, the whole of this adventure puzzles the senses and the reason.

Sos. A truce, gentlemen, to all your surprises; and joyfully sit down to feast till morning. [*Alone.*] Now for a good feed, and to put myself in condition to relate our valiant deeds! I am itching to be at it; and I was never so hungry in my life.[45]

[45] From this to the end of the comedy, *Amphitryon* belongs entirely to Molière.

SCENE VII.

MERCURY, SOSIA.[46]

Mer. Stop. What! you come to poke your nose in here, you impudent plate-licker!

Sos. For mercy's sake, gently!

Mer. Ah! you are at it again! I shall dust your coat for you.

Sos. Alas! brave and generous I, compose yourself, I beg of you. Sosia, spare Sosia a little, and do not amuse yourself in cudgelling yourself.

Mer. Who gave you permission to call yourself by that name? Did I not expressly forbid you to do so, under penalty of a thousand blows?

Sos. It is a name we both may bear at the same time, under the same master. I am known for Sosia everywhere; I allow that you should be he, allow that I may be he also. Let us leave it to the two Amphitryons to display their jealousies, and, amidst their contentions, let us make the two Sosias live in peace.

Mer. No, one is quite enough; and I am obstinate in allowing no dividing.

Sos. You shall have the precedence over me; I shall be the younger, and you the elder.

Mer. No! a brother is troublesome, and is not to my taste; and I wish to be an only son.

Sos. O barbarous and tyrannical heart! Allow me at least to be your shadow.

Mer. Nothing of the kind.

Sos. Let your soul humanise itself with a little pity! Suffer me to be near you in that capacity: I shall be such a submissive shadow everywhere, that you shall be satisfied with me.

[46] See Appendix, Note L.

Mer. No quarter; the decree is immutable. If you again have the audacity to enter there, a thousand blows shall be the consequence.

Sos. Alack! poor Sosia, to what cruel disgrace are you reduced!

Mer. What! your lips still take the liberty of giving yourself a name which I forbid!

Sos. No, I was not hearing myself; and I was speaking of an old Sosia, who was formerly a relative of mine, and whom, with the greatest barbarity, they drove out at the dinner hour.

Mer. Beware of falling into that mistake, if you wish to remain among the living.

Sos. [*Aside*] How I would thrash you if I had the courage, for your too inflated pride, you double son of a strumpet!

Mer. What are you saying?

Sos. Nothing.

Mer. You are, I believe, muttering something to yourself.

Sos. Ask any one; I did not so much as breathe.

Mer. Certain words about the son of a strumpet have struck my ear, nothing is more certain.

Sos. It must be some parrot awakened by the beautiful weather.

Mer. Farewell. If your back should itch, this is the spot where I reside.

Sos. [*Alone*] O Heavens! the cursedest hour to be turned out of doors is the dinner hour. Come, let us submit to fate in our affliction. Let us to-day follow blind caprice, and by a proper union, join the unfortunate Sosia to the unfortunate Amphitryon. I perceive him coming in good company.[47]

[47] This scene is taken from Rotrou's *Les deux Sosies.*

SCENE VIII.

AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, PAUSICLES, SOSIA, *in a corner of the stage, without being seen.*

Amph. [*To several other officers who accompany him*] Stay here, gentlemen: follow us from a little distance, and do not all come forward, I pray you, until there is need for it.

Paus. I understand that this blow must touch you to the very heart.

Amph. My grief, alas! is poignant at all points, and I suffer in my affection, as much as in my honour.

Paus. If this resemblance is such as is said, Alcmena, without being to blame . . .

Amph. Ah! in the matter in question, a simple error becomes a real crime, and against its will, innocence perishes in it. Such errors, look at them in whatever light you will, touch us in the most delicate parts; and reason often pardons them, when honour and love cannot do so.

Argat. I do not perplex my thoughts about that; but I hate your gentlemen for their shameful delay; and that is a proceeding which wounds me to the quick, and of which people who have their hearts in the right place, will never approve. When anyone employs us, we should, headforemost, throw ourselves into his concerns. Argatiphontidas is not for compromising matters. It does not become men of honour to listen to the arguments of a friend's adversary; one should listen only to revenge at such times. Such a proceeding does not suit me; and one should begin always in those quarrels, by running a man through the body, without much ado. Yes, you shall see, whatever happens, that Argatiphontidas goes straight to the point; and I must crave as a particular favour that the scoundrel shall die by no other hand than mine.

Amph. Come on.

Sos. [*To Amphitryon*] I come, Sir, to undergo on both knees the just punishment of a cursed insolence. Strike, beat, thrash, overwhelm me with blows. Kill me in your anger, you will do well, I deserve it; and I shall not say a word against you.

Amph. Get up.. What are they doing?

Sos. I have been turned away without ceremony; and thinking to eat and be merry like them, I did not imagine that, in fact, I was waiting there to give myself a beating. Yes, the other I, servant to the other you, has played the very devil with me again. The same harsh destiny seems to pursue us both at present, Sir; and in short, they have un-Sosiad me, as they un-Amphitryon'd you.[48]

Amph. Follow me.

Sos. Is it not better to see if anybody is coming?

SCENE IX.

CLEANTHIS, AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAUCRATES, PAUSICLES, SOSIA.

Cle. O Heaven!

Amph. What scares you so? What is the fear with which I inspire you?

Cle. Lord-a-mercy! you are up there, and yet I see you here!

Nau. Do not be in a hurry; here he comes to give the wished-for explanation before us all, and which, if we may believe what he has just said about it, shall at once dispel your trouble and care.

[48] Plautus is full of similar plays on words. For example, in *Trinummus; the three pieces of money*, Act iv., Scene 2, the Sharper says to Charmides, an Athenian merchant, and whom he does not believe to be "his own self," "therefore, in such manner as you Charmidised yourself, do you again un-Charmidise yourself."

SCENE X.

MERCURY, AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAUCRATES, PAUSICLÈS, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

Mer. Yes, you all shall see him; and know beforehand that it is the great master of the gods, whom, under the beloved features of this resemblance, Alcmena has caused to descend hither from the Heavens. And as for me, I am Mercury, who, not knowing what to do, has thrashed more or less him whose form I have assumed: but now he may comfort himself; for the blows of a god confer honour upon him who receives them.

Sos. Upon my word, Mister god, I am your servant; but I could have dispensed with your courtesy.

Mer. I henceforth give him leave to be Sosia. I am tired of wearing such an ugly face; and I am going to the skies to wash it off entirely with ambrosia.

[*Mercury ascends to Heaven.*

Sos. May Heaven for ever deprive you of the fancy of coming near me again! Your fury against me has been too inveterate; and never in my life did I see a god who was more of a devil than you!

SCENE XI.

JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAUCRATES, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, PAUSICLES, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

Jup. [*Announced by the noise of thunder, armed with his thunder-bolt, in a cloud, on his eagle*][49] Behold, Amphitryon, who has imposed upon you; and see Jupiter appear in his own features. By these signs you may easily recognise him; and it is sufficient, I think, to re-instate your heart in the condition in which it ought to be, and

[49] See Appendix, Note M.

to restore peace and happiness in your family. My name, which the whole world incessantly worships, quells in this case all scandal that might be spread. A share with Jupiter has nothing dishonourable in it, and doubtless, it can be only glorious to find one's self the rival of the sovereign of the gods. I see no reason in it that your love should murmur, and it is I, god as I am, who, in this adventure, should be jealous. Alcmena is wholly yours, whatever pains may be taken; and it must be very gratifying to your love to see that there is no other way of pleasing her than to assume the appearance of her husband; that even Jupiter, adorned by his immortal glory, could not by himself conquer her fidelity; and that what she granted him has, by her ardent heart, been granted only to you.[50]

Sos. My lord Jupiter knows how to gild the pill.

Jup. Banish, therefore, your gloomy and heart-felt grief, and restore its wonted calm to the ardour which consumes you. In your house shall be born a son, who, under the name of Hercules, shall fill the vast universe with his exploits. A glorious fate, bearing a thousand blessings, shall prove to every one, that I am your support; I shall make your destiny the envy of the whole world. You may safely flatter yourself with these promised hopes. It is a crime to doubt them: the words of Jupiter are the decrees of fate.

[*He vanishes in the clouds.*

Nau. Certainly I am enraptured at these brilliant marks . . .

Sos. Gentlemen, will you please to follow my opinion? Embark not in these pretty congratulations: it is a bad investment; and pretty phrases are embarrassing on either side, in such a compliment. The great god Jupiter has

[50] If in this play there had been the slightest allusion to the love of Louis XIV. for Madame de Montespan Molière would certainly not have slipped in this compliment to her husband.

done us much honour, and, no doubt, his goodness towards us is unequalled; he promises the certain felicity of a glorious fate, bearing a thousand blessings, and, that in our house shall be born a very mighty son. Nothing could be better than all this. But, in short, a truce to speeches, and let every one retire in peace. It is always best in these matters to say nothing.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 241.

Dryden, in his *Amphitryon*, has imitated the first scene of the first act of Molière's play of the same name.

Mercury. [*To Night*] Madam Night, a good Even to you: fair and softly, I beseech you, Madam: I have a Word or two to you, from no less a God than Jupiter.

Night. O my nimble-finger'd God of Theft, what makes you here on Earth, at this unseasonable Hour? what Banker's Shop is to be broke open To-night? or what Clippers, and Coiners, and Conspirators, have been invoking your Deity for their Assistance?

Merc. Faith none of those Enormities: and yet I am still in my Vocation: for you know I am a Jack of all Trades: at a Word Jupiter is indulging his Genius To-night, with a certain noble Sort of Recreation, call'd Wenching; the Truth on't is, Adultery is its proper Name.

Night. Jupiter would do well to stick to his Wife Juno.

Merc. He has been marry'd to her above these Hundred Years: and that's long enough in Conscience to stick to one Woman. . . .

Night. If I were his Wife, I would raise a Rebellion against him, for the Violation of my Bed.

Merc. Thou are mistaken, Old Night: his Wife could raise no Faction: all the Deities in Heav'n wou'd take the Part of the Cuckold-making God . . . Nay, the very Goddesses wou'd stickle in the Cause of Love, 'tis the way to be popular . . . For what dost thou think old Saturn was depos'd, but that he . . . made no Court to the fair Ladies? Pallas and Juno themselves, as chaste as they are, cry'd Shame on him. I say unto thee, Old Night, Woe be to the Monarch that has not the Women on his Side.

Night. Then by your Rule, Mercury, a King who wou'd live happily, must debauch his whole Nation of Women.

Merc. As far as his ready Money will go, I mean; for Jupiter himself can't please all of 'em. But this is beside my present Commission; he has sent me to will and require you to make a swinging long Night for him: for he hates to be stinted in his Pleasures.

Night. Tell him plainly, I'll rather lay down my Commission: what, wou'd he make a Bawd of me?

Merc. Poor Ignorant! why he meant thee for a Bawd when he first made thee. What art thou good for, but to be a Bawd? Is not Daylight better for Mankind, I mean as to any other Use, but only for Love and Fornication? Thou hast been a Bawd too, a reverend, primitive, original Bawd, from the first Hour of thy Creation! and all the laudable Actions of Love have been committed under thy Mantle. Pr'ythee for what dost thou think that thou art worshipp'd?

Night. Why, for my Stars and Moonshine.

Merc. That is, for holding a Candle to Iniquity: but if they were put out, thou would'st be doubly worship'd, by the willing bashful Virgins.

Night. Then for my Quiet, and the Sweetness of my Sleep.

Merc. No, for thy sweet Waking all the Night: for Sleep comes not upon Lovers till thou art vanish'd.

Night. But it will be against Nature, to make a long Winter's Night at Midsummer.

Merc. Trouble not yourself for that: Phœbus is order'd to make a short Summer's Day To-morrow: so in four and twenty Hours all will be at Rights again.

Night. Well, I am edified by your Discourse; and my Comfort is, that whatever Work is made, I see nothing.

Merc. About your Business then: put a Spoke into your Chariot-wheels, and order the Seven Stars, to halt, while I put myself into the Habit of a Serving-man; and dress up a false Sosia, to wait upon a false Amphitryon. Good night, Night.

Night. My Service to Jupiter. Farewell Mercury. [*Night goes backward.*] [*Exit Mercury.*

B, Page 248.

Dryden, in the first scene of the second act of *Amphitryon*, has imitated partly the first, but chiefly the second scene of the first act of Molière's play of the same name.

SOSIA *with a Dark-Lanthorn:* MERCURY *in* SOSIA'S *Shape, with a Dark-Lanthorn also.*

Sosia. Was not the Devil in my Master, to send me out in this dreadful dark Night, to bring the News of his Victory to my Lady? and was not I possess'd with ten Devils, for going on his Errand, without a Convoy for the Safeguard of my Person? Lord, how am I melted into Sweat with Fear! I am diminish'd of my natural Weight, above two Stone: I shall not bring half myself home again, to my poor Wife and Family: I have been in a Ague-Fit, ever since shut of Evening; what with the Fright of Trees by the Highway, which look'd maliciously like

Thieves by Moonshine; and what with Bulrushes by the River side, that shak'd like Spears, and Lancets at me. Well! the greatest Plague of a Serving-Man, is to be hir'd to some great Lord! They care not what Drudgery they put upon us, while they lie lolling at their Ease in bed, and stretch their lazy Limbs, in Expectation . . .

Mercury. [*Aside*] He is but a poor Mortal, that suffers this! but I, who am a God, am degraded to a Foot-Pimp: a Waiter without Doors; a very civil employment for a Deity!

Sos. The better Sort of 'em will say, Upon my Honour, at every Word: yet ask 'em for our Wages, and they plead the Privilege of their Honour, and will not pay us: nor let us take our Privilege of the Law upon them. These are a very hopeful Sort of Patriots, to stand up as they do for Liberty and Property of the Subject: There's Conscience for you!

Merc. [*Aside*] This Fellow has something of the Republican Spirit in him.

Sos. [*Looking about him*] Stay; this methinks should be our House: And I shou'd thank the Gods now for bringing me safe home: But I think I had as good let my Devotions alone, till I have got the Reward for my good News, and then thank 'em once for all: For, if I praise 'em before I am safe within Doors, some damn'd Mastiff Dog may come out and worry me; and then my thanks are thrown away upon 'em.

Mer. [*Aside*] Thou art a wicked Rogue, and wilt have thy Bargain before-hand: Therefore thou get'st not into the House this Night; and thank me accordingly as I use thee.

Sos. Now am I to give my Lady an Account of my Lord's Victory; 'tis good to exercise my Parts before-hand, and file my Tongue into eloquent Expressions, to tickle her Ladyship's Imagination.

Merc. [*Aside*] Good! and here's the God of Eloquence to judge of thy Oration.

Sos. [*Setting down his Lanthorn*] This Lanthorn for once, shall be my Lady; because she is the Lamp of all Beauty and Perfection.

Merc. [*Aside*] No, Rogue, 'tis thy Lord is the Lanthorn by this time, or Jupiter is turn'd Fumbler.

Sos. Then thus I make my Addresses to her: [*Bows*] Madam, my Lord has chosen me out, as the most faithful, tho' the most unworthy of his Followers, to bring your Ladyship this following Account of our glorious Expedition. Then she,——O my poor Sosia, [*In a shrill tone*] how am I overjoy'd to see thee! She can say no less:——Madam, you do me too much Honour, and the World will envy me this Glory:——Well answer'd on my Side.——And how does my Lord Amphitryon?——Madam, he always does like a man of Courage when he is call'd by Honour.——There I think I nick'd it.——But when will he return?——As soon as possibly he can: But not so soon as his impatient Heart cou'd wish him with your Ladyship.

Merc. [*Aside*] When Thebes is an University, thou deservest to be their Orator.

Sos. But what does he do, and what does he say? Pr'ythee tell me something more of him——He always says less than he does, Madam: And his Enemies have found it to their cost—Where the Devil did I learn these Elegancies and Gallantries?

Merc. So; he has all the natural Endowments of a Fop; and only wants the Education!

Sos. [*Staring up to the sky*] What, is the Devil in the Night! She's as long as two Nights: The seven Stars are just where they were seven Hours ago! high Day—high Night, I mean, by my Favour. What, has Phœbus been playing the Goodfellow, and over-slept himself, that he forgets his duty to us Mortals?

Merc. How familiarly the Rascal treats us Gods! but I shall make him alter his Tone immediately.

[*Mercury comes nearer, and stands just before him.*

Sos. [*Seeing him, and starting back, aside*] How now? what do my eyes dazzle, or is my dark Lanthorn false to me! is not that a Giant before our Door? or a Ghost of some Body slain in the late Battle? If he be, 'tis unconscionably done, to fright an honest man thus, who never drew Weapon wrathfully in all my life——Whatever Wight he be, I am devilishly afraid, that's certain; but, 'tis Discretion to keep my own Counsel: I'll sing, that I may seem valiant.

[*Sosia sings; and as Mercury speaks, by little and little drops his Voice.*

Merc. What saucy Companion is this, that deafens us with his hoarse Voice? What Midnight Ballad-singer have we here? I shall teach the Villain to leave off Catterwawling.

Sos. I would I had Courage, for his Sake; that I might teach him to call my Singing Catterwawling; an illiterate Rogue; an Enemy to the Muses and to Musick.

Merc. There is an ill Savour that offends my Nostrils, and it wafteth this way.

Sos. He has smelt me out; my Fear has betray'd me into this Savour ——I am a dead Man: the bloody Villain is at his fee, fa, fum, already.

Merc. Stand, who goes there?

Sos. A Friend.

Merc. What Friend?

Sos. Why a Friend to all the World that will give me leave to live peaceably.

Merc. I defy Peace and all its Works; my Arms are out of Exercise, they have maul'd no Body these three Days: I long for an honourable Occasion to pound a Man, and lay him asleep at the first Buffet.

Sos. [*Aside*] That would almost do me a Kindness; for I have been kept waking, without tipping one wink of Sleep, these three Nights.

Merc. Of what Quality are you, Fellow?

Sos. Why I am a Man, Fellow—Courage Sosia.

Merc. What kind of Man?

Sos. Why a two-legg'd Man, what Man should I be?—[*Aside*] I must bear up to him; he may prove as errant a Milksop as myself.

Merc. Thou art a Coward I warrant thee, do not I hear thy Teeth chatter in thy Head?

Sos. Ay, ay, that's only a Sign they would be snapping at thy Nose—[*Aside*] Bless me what an Arm and Fist he has, with great Thumbs too: And Golls and Knuckle-bones of a very Butcher.

Merc. Sirrah, from whence come you, and whither go you; answer me directly, upon pain of Assassination.

Sos. I am coming from whence I came, and am going whither I go: That's directly home—Tho' this is somewhat an uncivil manner of proceeding, at the first Sight of a Man, let me tell you.

Merc. Then to begin our better Acquaintance, let me first make you a small Present of this Box o' the Ear. [*Strikes him.*

Sos. If I were as cholerick a Fool as you are now, here would be fine Work betwixt us two; but I am a little better bred, than to disturb the sleeping Neighbourhood, and so good Night, Friend——

[*Is going.*

Merc. [*Stopping him*] Hold Sir; you and I must not part so easily; once more, whither are you going?

Sos. Why I am going as fast as I can, to get out of the reach of your Clutches: Let me but only knock at that door there.

Merc. What business have you at that Door, Sirrah?

Sos. This is our House; and when I am got in, I'll tell you more.

Merc. Whose House is this, Sauciness, that you are so familiar with, to call it ours?

Sos. 'Tis mine, in the first Place, and next my Master's; for I lie in the Garret, and he lies under me.

Merc. Have your Master and you no Names, Sirrah?

Sos. His Name is Amphitryon, hear that and tremble.

Merc. What, my Lord General?

Sos. O, has his Name mollify'd you! I have brought you down a Peg lower already, Friend.

Merc. And your Name is——

Sos. Lord, Friend, you are so very troublesome. What should my Name be but Sosia.

Merc. How, Sosia, say you? how long have you taken up that Name, Sirrah?

Sos. Here's a fine question: Why I never took it up Friend, it was born with me.

Merc. What was your Name born Sosia? take this Remembrance for that Lye. [*Beats him.*

Sos. Hold, Friend, you are so very flippant with your Hands, you

won't hear Reason. What Offence has my Name done you, that you should beat me for it? S. O. S. I. A. they are as civil, honest, harmless Letters, as any are in the whole Alphabet.

Merc. I have no quarrel to the Name, but that 'tis e'en too good for you, and 'tis none of yours.

Sos. What, am not I Sosia, say you?

Merc. No.

Sos. I should think you are somewhat merrily disposed, if you had not beaten me in such sober Sadness. You would persuade me out of my Heathen Name, would you?

Merc. Say you are Sosia again at your Peril, Sirrah.

Sos. I dare say nothing, but Thought is free: but whatever I am call'd, I am Amphitryon's Man, and the first Letter of my Name is S. too. You had best tell me that my Master did not send me Home to my Lady, with News of his Victory?

Merc. I say he did not.

Sos. Lord, Lord, Friend, one of us two is horribly given to Lying—but I do not say which of us, to avoid Contention.

Merc. I say my name is Sosia, and yours is not.

Sos. I would you could make good your Words, for then I should not be beaten, and you should.

Merc. I find you would be Sosia if you durst—but if I catch you thinking so——

Sos. I hope I may think I was Sosia; and I can find no difference between my former Self, and my present Self; but that I was plain Sosia before, and now I am lac'd Sosia.

Merc. Take this, for being so impudent to think so. [*Beats him.*

Sos. [*Kneeling*] Truce a little, I beseech thee! I would be a Stock or a Stone now by my good Will, and would not think at all for Self-preservation. But will you give me leave to argue the Matter fairly with you? And promise me to depose that Cudgel, if I can prove myself to be that Man that I was before I was beaten?

Merc. Well, proceed in Safety; I promise you I will not beat you.

Sos. In the first place, then, is not this Town called Thebes?

Merc. Undoubtedly.

Sos. And is not this House Amphitryon's?

Merc. Who denies it?

Sos. I thought you would have deny'd that too: for all hangs upon a String. Remember then, that those two preliminary Articles are already granted. In the next place, did not the aforesaid Amphitryon beat the Teleboans, kill their King Pterelas, and send a certain Servant, meaning some Body, that for Sake-sake shall be nameless, to bring a Present to his Wife, with News of his Victory, and of his Resolution to return To-morrow?

Merc. This is all true, to a very tittle; but who is that certain Servant, there's all the Question?

Sos. Is it Peace or War betwixt us?

Merc. Peace.

Sos. I dare not wholly trust that abominable Cudgel; but 't is a certain Friend of yours and mine, that had a certain Name before he was beaten out of it; but if you are a Man that depend not altogether upon Force and Brutality, but somewhat also upon Reason, now do you bring better Proofs that you are that same certain Man; and in order to it, answer me to certain Questions.

Merc. I say I am Sosia, Amphitryon's Man; what Reason have you to urge against it?

Sos. What was your Father's Name?

Merc. Davus; who was an honest Husbandman, whose Sister's Name was Harpage, that was marry'd and dy'd in a Foreign Country.

Sos. So far you are right, I must confess; and your Wife's Name is——

Merc. Bromia, a devilish Shrew of her Tongue, and a Vixen of her Hands, that leads me a miserable life; keeps me to hard duty in Bed; and beats me every Morning when I have risen from her Side, without having first——

Sos. I understand you; by many a sorrowful Token. This must be I——

Merc. I was once taken up on Suspicion of Burglary, and was whipt thro' Thebes, and branded for my Pains.

Sos. Right Me again; but if you are I, as I begin to suspect, that Whipping and Branding might have been past over in Silence, for both our Credits:—And yet now I think on 't, if I am I, (as I am I) he cannot be I. All these Circumstances he might have heard; but I will now interrogate him upon some private Passages.——What was the Present that Amphitryon sent by you or me, no matter which of us, to his Wife Alcmena?

Merc. A Buckle of Diamonds, consisting of five large Stones.

Sos. And where are they now?

Merc. In a Case, seal'd with my Master's Coat of Arms.

Sos. This is prodigious, I confess; but yet 't is nothing now I think on 't, for some false Brother may have reveal'd it to him. [*Aside.*] But I have another Question to ask you, of somewhat that pass'd only betwixt myself and me; if you are Sosia, what were you doing in the Heat of Battle?

Merc. What a wise Man should, that has Respect for his own Person. I ran into our Tent, and hid myself amongst the Baggage.

Sos. [*Aside*] Such another cutting Answer, and I must provide myself of another Name. [*To him*] And how did you pass your Time in that same Tent? You need not answer to every Circumstance so exactly now; you must lye a little, that I may think you the more Me.

Merc. That Cunning shall not serve your Turn, to circumvent me out of my Name: I am for plain naked Truth—There stood a Hogshead of old Wine, which my Lord reserv'd for his own Drinking——

Sos. [*Aside*] O the Devil! as sure as Death, he must have hid himself in that Hogshead, or he could never have known that!

Merc. And by that Hogshead, upon the Ground, there lay the kind Inviter and Provoker of good Drinking——

Sos. Nay, now I have caught you; there was neither Inviter, nor Provoker, for I was all alone.

Merc. A lusty Gammon of——

Sos. [*Sighing*] Bacon—that Word has quite made an end of me—Let me see—this must be I, in spite of me—but let me view him nearer.

[*Walks about Mercury with his dark Lanthorn.*

Merc. What are you walking about me for, with your dark Lanthorn?

Sos. No harm, Friend, I am only surveying a Parcel of Earth here, that I find we two are about to bargain for:—He's damnable like me, that's certain. *Imprimis*, there's the Patch upon my Nose . . . *Item*, A very foolish Face with a long Chin at the end on't: *Item*, One pair of shambling Legs, with two splay Feet belonging to them. And—*summa totalis*, from Head to Foot all my Bodily Apparel—[*To Mercury*] Well, you are Sosia; there's no denying it: but what am I then? for my mind gives me, I am some Body still, if I knew but who I were.

Merc. When I have a mind to be Sosia no more, then thou mayst be Sosia again.

Sos. I have but one Request more to thee, that, tho' not as Sosia, yet as a Stranger, I may go into that House, and carry a civil Message to my Lady.

Merc. No, Sirrah; not being Sosia, you have no Message to deliver, nor no Lady in this House.

Sos. Thou canst not be so barbarous, to let me lie in the Street all Night, after such a Journey, and such a Beating—and therefore I am resolv'd to knock at the Door in my own Defence.

Merc. If you come near the Door, I recal my Word and break off the Truce—and then expect—— [*Holds up his Cudgel.*

Sos. No, the Devil take me if I do expect; I have felt too well what sour Fruit that Crab-tree bears: I'll rather beat it back upon the Hoof to my Lord Amphitryon, to see if he will acknowledge me for Sosia: if he does not, then I am no longer his Slave; there's my Freedom dearly purchas'd with a sore Drubbing: if he does acknowledge me, then I am Sosia again; so far 't is tolerably well: but then I shall have a second Drubbing for an unfortunate Ambassador as I am; and that's intolerable. [*Exit Sosia.*

MERCURY, *alone.*

I have fobb'd off his Excellency pretty well. Now let him return, and make the best of his Credentials. I think too I have given Jupiter sufficient Time . . . Oh, he has taken his Cue; and here he comes . . .

C, Page 257.

Dryden, in the second scene of the second act of *Amphitryon*, has imitated the second scene of the first act of Molière's play of the same name.

Enter JUPITER *leading* ALCMENA, *follow'd by* PHÆDRA. *Pages with Torches before them.*

Jupiter. Those Torches are offensive; Stand aloof: [*To the Pages.*
For, tho' they bless me with thy heav'nly Sight, [*To her.*
They may disclose the Secret I would hide:
The Thebans must not know I have been here;
Detracting Crouds would blame me that I'd robb'd
These happy Moments from my publick Charge.
To consecrate to thy desir'd Embrace:
And I could wish no Witness but thyself;
For thou thyself art all I wish to please.

Alcmena. So long an Absence, and so short a Stay!
What, but one Night! One Night of Joy and Love,
Could only pay one Night of Cares and Fears;
And all the rest are an uncancell'd Sum!
Curse on this Honour and this public Fame;
Would you had less of both, and more of Love.

Jup. Alcmena, I must go.

Alc. Not yet, my Lord.

Jup. Indeed I must.

Alc. Indeed you shall not go.

Jup. Behold the ruddy Streaks o'er yonder Hill,
Those are the Blushes of the breaking Morn,
That kindle Day-light to this nether World.

Alc. No matter for the Day, it was but made
To number out the Hours of busy Men.
Let 'em be busy still, and still be wretched;
And take their fill of anxious drudging Day:
But you and I will draw our Curtains close,
Extinguish Day-Light, and put out the Sun:
Come back, my Lord, in faith you shall retire.
You have not yet lay long enough in Bed,
To warm your widow'd Side.

Phædra. [*Aside*] I find my Lord is an excellent Schoolmaster, my Lady is so willing to repeat her Lesson.

Mercury. [*Aside*] That's a plaguy little Devil; what a roguish eye she has! I begin to like her strangely: she's the Perquisite of my Place too; for my Lady's Waiting-woman is the proper Fees of my Lord's chief Gentleman. I have the privilege of a God too . . . Let me see—Let me see: I have discover'd something that pleases me already.

Jup. Let me not live but thou art all Enjoyment!
So charming and so sweet,
That not a Night, but whole Eternity
Were well employ'd
To love thy each Perfection as it ought.
Alc. [*Kissing him*] I'll bribe you with this Kiss to stay awhile.
Jup. [*Kissing her*] A Bribe indeed that soon will bring me back
But, to be just, I must restore your Bribe.
How I could dwell for ever on those Lips!
O I could Kiss them pale with Eagerness!
So soft, by Heav'n, and such a juicy Sweet,
That ripen'd Peaches have not half the Flavour.
Alc. Ye niggard Gods! you make our Lives too long:
You fill them with Diseases, Wants and Woes,
And only dash them with a little Love;
Sprinkled by Fits, and with a sparing Hand:
Count all our Joys, from Childhood e'en to Age,
They would but make a Day of ev'ry Year:
Take back your sev'nty Years, (the Stint of Life)
Or else be kind, and cram the Quintessence
Of sev'nty Years, into sweet sev'nty Days:
For all the rest is flat, insipid Being.
Jup. But yet one Scruple pains me at my Parting;
I love so nicely, that I cannot bear
To owe the Sweets of Love which I have tasted,
To the submissive Duty of a Wife:
Tell me, and sooth my Passion ere I go,
That in the kindest Moments of the Night,
When you gave up *yourself to Love and me,*
You thought *not of a Husband, but a Lover.*
Alc. But tell me first, *why you would raise a Blush*
Upon my Cheeks, by asking such a Question?
Jup. I would owe nothing to a Name so dull
As Husband is, but to a Lover all.
Alc. You should have ask'd me then, when Love and Night,
And Privacy, had favour'd your Demand.
Jup. I ask it now, because my Tenderness
Surpasses that of Husbands for their Wives.
O that you lov'd like me! then you would find
A thousand, thousand Niceties in Love;
The common Love of Sex to Sex is brutal:
But Love refin'd will fancy to itself
Millions of gentle Cares, and sweet Disquiets;
The being happy is not half the Joy;
The Manner of the Happiness is all!
In me (my charming Mistress) you behold

A Lover that disdains a lawful Title ;
Such as of Monarchs to successive Thrones ;
The generous Lover holds by force of Arms ;
And claims his Crown by Conquest.

Alc. Methinks you shou'd be pleas'd, I give you all
A virtuous and a Modest Wife can give.

Jup. No, no, that very Name of Wife and Marriage
Is Poison to the dearest Sweets of Love ;
To please my Niceness you must separate
The Lover from his mortal Foe, the Husband.
Give to the yawning Husband your cold Virtue ;
But all your vigorous Warmth, your melting Sighs,
Your amorous Murmurs, be your Lover's Part.

Alc. I comprehend not what you mean, my Lord ;
But only love me still, and love me thus,
And think me such as best may please your Thought.

Jup. There 's a Mystery of Love in all I say :
Farewell : and when you see your Husband next,
Think of your Lover then.

D, Page 259.

Dryden has imitated Molière's *Amphitryon* (Act i., Scene 4), as follows, in the last scene of the second act of his comedy. Cleanthis is here called Bromia.

Brom. Traytor ! that you are going away without seeing her (your wife).

Merc. I am doing my Duty, and following my Master.

Brom. Umph—so brisk too ! your Master did his Duty to my Lady before he parted : He cou'd leave his Army in the Lurch, and come galloping home at Midnight . . . to steal to Bed as quietly as any Mouse, I warrant you : My Master knew what belong'd to a marry'd Life ; but you, Sirrah—You Trencher-carrying Rascal, you worse than Dunghill-Cock ; that stood clapping your Wings and crowing without Doors, when you should have been at Roost, you Villain.—

Merc. Hold your Peace, Dame Partlet, and leave your Cackling : My Master charg'd me to stand Centry without Doors.

Brom. My Master ! I dare sware thou bely'st him ; my Master's more a Gentleman than to lay such an unreasonable Command upon a poor distressed marry'd Couple, and after such an Absence too. No, there 's no Comparison between my Master and thee, thou Sneaksby.

Merc. No more than there is betwixt my Lady and you, Bromia. You and I have had our time in a civil way, Spouse, and much good Love has been betwixt us ; but we have been marry'd fifteen Years, I take it ; and that hoighty toighty Business ought, in Conscience, to be over.

Brom. Marry come up, my saucy Companion! I am neither old, nor ugly enough to have that said to me.

Merc. But will you hear Reason, Bromia? My Lord and my Lady are yet in a manner Bride and Bridegroom: they are in Honey Moon still: do but think in Decency what a Jest it wou'd be to the Family, to see two venerable old married People, lying snug in a Bed together, and sighing out fine tender Things to one another!

Brom. How now, Traitor, dar'st thou maintain that I am past the Age of having fine Things said to me?

Merc. Not so, my Dear; but certainly I am past the Age of saying them.

Brom. Thou deserv'st not to be yok'd with a Woman of Honour, as I am, thou perjur'd Villain.

Merc. Ay, you are too much a Woman of Honour, to my Sorrow; many a poor Husband wou'd be glad to compound for less Honour in his Wife, and more Quiet. Pr'ythee be but honest and continent in thy Tongue, and do thy worst with every Thing else about thee.

Brom. Thou wou'dst have a Woman of the Town, wou'dst thou! to be always speaking my Husband fair, to make him digest his Cuckoldom more easily: Wou'dst thou be a Wittal, with a Vengeance to thee? I am resolv'd I'll scour thy Hide for that Word. [*Holds up her Ladle at him.*

Merc. Thou wilt not strike thy Lord and Husband, wilt thou?

Brom. Since thou wilt none of the Meat, 'tis but Justice to give thee the Bastings of the Ladle. [*She courses him about.*

Mercury running about. [*Aside*] Was ever poor Deity so Henpeck'd as I am! nay, then, 'tis time to charm her asleep with my enchanted Rod—before I am disgrac'd . . .

[*Plucks out his Caduceus, and strikes her upon the shoulder with it.*

Brom. What, art thou rebelling against thy anointed Wife? I'll make thee——how now——What, has the Rogue bewitch'd me! I grow dull and stupid on the sudden——I can neither stir Hand nor Foot——I am just like him; I have lost the Use of all my—Members ——[*Yawning*] I can't so much as wag my Tongue—neither, and that's the last live—ing Part about a—Woman—— [*Falls down.*

MERCURY *alone.*

Lord, what have I suffer'd, for being but a counterfeit marry'd Man one Day! If ever I come to this House, as a Husband again——then ——and yet that then was a Lye too——For while I am in Love with this young Gipsy, Phædra, I must return—— But lie thou there, thou Type of Juno; thou that want'st nothing of her Tongue, but the Immortality. If Jupiter ever lets thee set Foot in Heaven, Juno will have a rattling Second of thee; and there will never be a fair Day in Heaven or Earth after it.

For two such Tongues will break the Poles asunder;
And, hourly scolding, make perpetual Thunder. [*Exit Mercury.*

E, Page 261.

Dryden has followed pretty closely, in the first scene of his third act of *Amphitryon*, the same scene of the second act of Molière's play.

AMPHITRYON *and* SOSIA.

Amph. Now Sirrah, follow me into the House, thou shalt be convinc'd at thy own Cost, Villain! What horrible Lyes hast thou told me! such Improbabilities, such Stuff, such Nonsense!——that the Monster with two long Horns, that frighted the great King, and the Devil at the Stone-cutters, are Truths to these.

Sos. I am but a Slave, and you are Master; and a poor Man is always to lye, when a rich Man is pleas'd to contradict him: but as sure as this is our House——

Amph. So sure 'tis thy Place of Execution. Thou art not made for Lying neither.

Sos. That's certain; for all my Neighbours say I have an honest Face; or else they would never call me Cuckold, as they do.

Amph. I mean thou hast not Wit enough to make a Lye that will hang together: thou hast set up a Trade, that thou hast not Stock enough to manage: O that I had but a Crab-tree Cudgel for thy sake!

Sos. How a Cudgel, said you! the Devil take Jupiter for inventing that hard-hearted, merciless, knobby Wood.

Amph. The Bitterness is yet to come: thou hast had but a half Dose of it.

Sos. I was never good at swallowing Physick; and my Stomach wambles at the very Thought of it: But, if I must have a second Beating, in Conscience let me strip first, that I may show you the black and blue Streaks upon my Sides and Shoulders. I am sure I suffer'd them in your Service.

Amph. To what Purpose wou'dst thou show them?

Sos. Why, to the Purpose that you may not strike me upon the sore Places; and that as he beat me the last Night Cross-ways, so you wou'd please to beat me long-ways, to make clean Work on't, that at least my Skin may look like Checquer-work.

Amph. This Request is too reasonable to be refus'd; but, that all Things may be done in Order, tell me over again the same Story, with all the Circumstances of thy Commission: that a Blow may follow in due Form for every Lye. To Repetition, Rogue, to Repetition.

Sos. No, it shall be all a Lye if you please, and I'll eat my Words to save my Shoulders.

Amph. Ah, Sirrah, now you find you are to be disprov'd, but 'tis too late: to Repetition, Rogue, to Repetition.

Sos. With all my Heart, to any Repetition but the Cudgel; but wou'd you be pleas'd to answer me one civil Question? Am I to use Complaisance to you, as to a great Person, that will have all Things

said your own Way; or am I to tell you the naked Truth alone, without the Ceremony of a farther Beating?

Amph. Nothing but the Truth, and the whole Truth; so help thee Cudgel——

Sos. That 's a damn'd Conclusion of a Sentence: but since it must be so——Back and Sides, at your own Peril——I set out from the Port in an unlucky Hour; the dusky Canopy of Night inveloping the Hemisphere.—

Amph. [*Strikes him*] *Imprimis*, For Fustain:——now proceed.

Sos. I stand corrected: In plain Prose then, I went darkling, and whistling, to keep myself from being afraid: mumbling Curses betwixt my Teeth, for being sent at such an unnatural Time of Night.

Amph. How, Sirrah, cursing and swearing against your Lord and Master! take—— [*Going to strike.*

Sos. Hold, Sir——pray consider, if this be not unreasonable, to strike me for telling the whole Truth, when you commanded me: I'll fall into my old Dog-trot of Lying again, if this must come of plain Dealing.

Amph. To avoid Impertinences, make an End of your Journey; and come to the House: what found you there a God's Name?

Sos. I came thither in no God's Name at all, but in the Devil's Name; I found before the Door a swinging Fellow, with all my Shapes and Features, and accoutred also in my Habit.

Amph. Who was that fellow?

Sos. Who shou'd it be, but another Sosia! a certain Kind of other Me: who knew all my unfortunate Commission, precisely, to a Word, as well as I Sosia; as being sent by yourself from the Port, upon the same Errand to Alcmena.

Amph. What gross Absurdities are these?

Sos. O Lord, O Lord, what Absurdities! as plain as any pikestaff. That other Me, had posted himself there before me, me. You won't give a Man leave to speak poetically now; or else I wou'd say, that I was arrived at the Door, before I came thither.

Amph. This must either be a Dream, or Drunkenness, or Madness in thee. Leave your Buffooning and Lying, I am not in Humour to bear it, Sirrah.

Sos. I wou'd you shou'd know I scorn a Lye, and am a Man of Honour in every thing, but just Fighting. I tell you once again in plain Sincerity, and Simplicity of Heart, that before last Night I never took myself but for one single individual Sosia; but, coming to our Door, I found myself, I know not how, divided, and as it were split into two Sosias.

Amph. Leave Buffooning: I see you wou'd make me Laugh, but you play the Fool scurvily.

Sos. That may be: but if I am a Fool, I am not the only Fool in this Company.

Amph. How now, Impudence! I shall——

Sos. Be not in Wrath, Sir: I meant not you: I cannot possibly be the only Fool; for if I am one Fool, I must certainly be two Fools; because, as I told you, I am double.

Amph. That one shou'd be two, is very probable!

Sos. Have you not seen a Six-pence split into two Halves, by some ingenious School-boy; which bore on either Side the Impression of the Monarch's Face? Now, as those Moieties were two Three-pences, and yet in Effect but one Six-pence—

Amph. No more of your villainous Tropes and Figures.

Sos. Nay, if an Orator must be disarm'd of his Similitudes——

Amph. A Man had need of Patience, to endure this Gibberish; be brief, and come to a Conclusion.

Sos. What wou'd you have, Sir? I came thither, but the t'other I was there before me; for that there was two I's, is as certain, as that I have two Eyes in this Head of mine. This I, that am here, was weary: the t'other I was fresh: this I was peaceable, and t'other I was a hectoring Bully I.

Amph. And thou expect'st I shou'd believe thee?

Sos. No, I am not so unreasonable: for I cou'd never have believ'd it myself, if I had not been well beaten into it: But a Cudgel, you know, is a convincing Argument in a brawny Fist: What shall I say, but that I was compell'd at last to acknowledge myself? I found that he was very I, without Fraud, Cozen, or Deceit. Besides, I view'd myself, as in a Mirror, from Head to Foot: He was handsome, of a noble Presence, a charming Air, loose and free in all his Motions. And saw he was so much I, that I shou'd have Reason to be better satisfied with my own Person, if his Hands had not been a little of the heaviest.

Amph. Once again to a Conclusion; Say you pass'd by him, and entered into the House.

Sos. I am a Friend to Truth, and say no such Thing: He defended the Door, and I could not enter.

Amph. How, not enter?

Sos. Why, how shou'd I enter? unless I were a Spright to glide by him, and shoot myself through Locks, and Bolts, and two Inch Boards?

Amph. O Coward! Didst thou not attempt to pass?

Sos. Yes, and was repuls'd and beaten for my Pains.

Amph. Who beat thee?

Sos. I beat Me.

Amph. Didst thou beat thyself!

Sos. I dont mean *I*, here: but the absent *Me* beat me here present.

Amph. There's no End of this intricate Piece of Nonsense.

Sos. 'Tis only Nonsense, because I speak it who am a poor Fellow; but it wou'd be Sense, and substantial Sense, if a Great Man said it

that was back'd with a Title, and the Eloquence of Ten Thousand Pounds a Year.

Amp. No more: but let us enter: Hold; my Alcmena is coming out, and has prevented me! how strangely will she be surpris'd to see me here, so unexpectedly!

F, Page 266.

Dryden has imitated, as follows, the second scene of the second act of Molière's *Amphitryon*. Cleanthis is now called Phædra.

Alcmena. [*To Phædra*] Make haste after me to the Temple; that we may thank the Gods for this glorious Success; which Amphitryon has had against the Rebels.
O Heaven! [*Seeing him.*
Amphitryon. Those Heav'ns, and all the blest Inhabitants,
[*Saluting her.*
Grant, that the sweet Rewarder of my Pains
May still be kind, as on our Nuptial Night.
Alc. So soon return'd!
Amph. So soon return'd! Is this my Welcome home?
[*Stepping back.*
So soon return'd, says I am come unwish'd.
This is no Language of desiring Love;
Love reckons Hours for Months and Days for Years:
And every little Absence is an Age.
Alc. What says my Lord?
Amph. No, my Alcmena, no:
True Love by its Impatience measures Time,
And the dear Object never comes too soon.
Alc. Nor ever came you so, nor ever shall:
But you yourself are chang'd from what you were,
Pall'd in Desires, and surfeited of Bliss:
Not so I met you at your last Return;
When yesternight I flew into your Arms,
And melted in your warm Embrace.
Amph. How's this?
Alc. Did not my Soul e'en sparkle at my Eyes,
And shoot itself into your much lov'd Bosom?
Did I not tremble with Excess of Joy?
Nay agonise with Pleasure at your sight,
With such inimitable Proofs of Passion,
As no false Love could feign!
Amph. What's this you tell me?
Alc. Far short of Truth, by Heav'n!

And you return'd those Proofs with Usury;
And left me with a Sigh, at Break of Day.
Have you forgot?

Amph. Or have you dreamt, Alcmena?
Perhaps some kind revealing Deity,
Has whisper'd, in your Sleep, the pleasing News
Of my Return; and you believ'd it real!
Perhaps too, in your Dream, you us'd me kindly:
And my preventing Image reap'd the Joys
You meant awake to me.

Alc. Some melancholy Vapour, sure, has seiz'd
Your Brain, Amphitryon, and disturb'd your Sense:
Or yesternight is not so long a time,
But you might yet remember; and not force
An honest Blush into my glowing Cheeks,
For that which lawful Marriage makes no Crime.

Amph. I thank you for my melancholy Vapour.

Alc. 'Tis but a just Requital for my Dream.

Phæd. I find my Master took too much of the Creature last Night, [*Aside*] and now is angling for a Quarrel, that no more may be expected from him . . . [*In the meantime Amphitryon and Alcmena walk by themselves, and frown at each other as they meet.*

Amph. You dare not justify it to my Face.

Alc. Not what?

Amph. That I return'd before this Hour.

Alc. You dare not, sure, deny you came last Night.
And stay'd till Break of day.

Amph. O Impudence!——Why, Sosia!

Sos. Nay, I say nothing; for all things here may go by Enchantment (as they did with me) for ought I know.

Alc. Speak, Phædra, Was he here?

Phæd. You know, Madam, I am but a Chamber-maid; and by my Place, I am to forget all that was done over Night in Love-Matters, ——unless my Master please to rub up my Memory with another Diamond.

Amph. Now, in the Name of all the Gods, Alcmena,
A little recollect your scatter'd Thoughts,
And weigh what you have said.

Alc. I weigh'd it well, Amphitryon, ere I spoke:
And she, and Bromia, all the Slaves and Servants,
Can witness they beheld you, when you came.
If other Proof were wanting, tell me how
I came to know your Fight, your Victory,
The Death of Pterelas in single Combat?
And farther, from whose Hands I had a Jewel,
The Spoils of him you slew?

Amph. This is amazing !
Have I already given you those Diamonds,
The Present I reserv'd ?
Alc. 'Tis an odd Question :
You see I wear 'em ; look !
Amph. Now answer, Sosia.
Sos. Yes, now I can answer with a safe Conscience, as to that Point ; all the rest may be Art Magick, but, as for the Diamonds, here they are, under safe Custody.
Alc. Then what are these upon my Arm ? [*To Sosia.*
Sos. Flints, or Pebbles, or some such Trumpery of enchanted Stones.
Phœd. They say, the Proof of a true Diamond is to glitter in the Dark : I think my Master had best take my Lady into some By-corner and try whose Diamond will sparkle best.
Sos. Yet now I think on't, Madam, did not a certain Friend of mine present 'em to you ?
Alc. What Friend ?
Sos. Why another Sosia, one that made himself Sosia in my despight, and also Unsosiated me.
Amph. Sirrah, leave your nauseous Nonsence ; break open the Seal, and take out the Diamonds.
Sos. More Words than one to a Bargain, Sir ; I thank you : That's no part of Prudence for me to commit Burglary upon the Seals : Do you look first upon the Signet, and tell me in your Conscience, whether the Seals be not as firm as when you clapt the Wax upon them.
Amph. The Signature is firm. [*Looking.*
Sos. Than take the Signature into your own Custody, and open it ; for I will have nothing done at my proper Peril.
[*Giving him the Casket.*
Amph. O Heav'ns ! here's nothing but an empty Space, the Nest where they were laid. [*Breaking open the Seal.*
Sos. Then if the Birds are flown, the Fault's not mine ; here has been fine conjuring Work ; or else the Jewel, knowing to whom it should be given, took Occasion to steal out, by a natural Instinct, and ty'd itself upon that pretty Arm.
Amph. Can this be possible !
Sos. Yes, very possible. You my Lord Amphitryon, may have brought forth another You my Lord Amphitryon, as well as I Sosia have brought forth another Me Sosia ; and our Diamonds may have procreated these Diamonds, and so we are all three double.
Phœd. If this be true, I hope my Goblet has gigg'd another golden Goblet ; and then they may carry double upon all four. [*Aside.*
Alc. My Lord, I have stood silent, out of Wonder
What you cou'd wonder at.
Amph. A chilling Sweat, a damp of Jealousy, [*Aside.*

Hangs on my Brows, and clams upon my Limbs.
I fear, and yet I must be satisfy'd:
And to be satisfy'd, I must dissemble.

Alc. Why muse you so, and murmur to yourself?
If you repent your Bounty, take it back.

Amph. Not so; but if you please, relate what passed
At our last Interview.

Alc. That Question wou'd infer you were not here.

Amph. I say not so;
I only wou'd refresh my Memory,
And have my Reasons to desire the Story.

Phæd. So, this is as good Sport for me, as an Examination . . . before a Magistrate.

Alc. The Story is not long: you know I met you,
Kiss'd you, and press'd you close within my Arms,
With all the tenderness of Wifely Love.

Amph. I could have spar'd that Kindness. [*Aside.*
And what did I? [*To her.*

Alc. You strain'd me with a Masculine Embrace;
As you wou'd squeeze my Soul out.

Amph. Did I so?

Alc. You did.

Amph. Confound those Arms that were so kind— [*Aside.*
Proceed, proceed—— [*To her.*

Alc. You wou'd not stay to sup; but much complaining of Drousiness, and want of natural Rest—

Amph. Made haste to Bed: Ha, was't not so? Go on— [*Aside.*
And stab me with each Syllable thou speak'st.

Phæd. So, now 'tis coming, now 'tis coming.

Alc. I have no more to say.

Amph. Why, went we not to Bed?

Alc. Why not?
Is it a Crime for Husband and for Wife
To go to Bed, my Lord!

Amph. Perfidious Woman!

Alc. Ungrateful Man!

Amph. She justifies it too.

Alc. I need not justify: Of what am I accused?

Amph. Of all that Prodigality of Kindness
Giv'n to another, and usurp'd from me.
So bless me Heav'n, if since my first Departure,
I ever set my Foot upon this Threshold.
So am I innocent of all those Joys,
And dry of those Embraces.

Alc. Then I, it seems, am false?

Amph. As surely false, as what thou say'st is true.

Alc. I have betray'd my Honour, and my Love?
And am a foul Adultress?
Amph. What thou art,
Thou stand'st condemn'd to be, by thy Relation.
Alc. Go, thou unworthy Man; for ever go:
No more my Husband: go thou base Impostor;
Who tak'st a vile Pretence to taint my Fame;
And, not content to leave, would'st ruin me.
Enjoy thy wish'd Divorce: I will not plead
My Innocence of this pretended Crime:
I need not; spit thy Venom; do thy worst:
But know, the more thou wou'dst expose my Virtue,
Like purest Linen laid in open Air,
'Twill bleach the more, and whiten to the View.
Amph. 'Tis well thou art prepar'd for thy Divorce:
For, know thou too, that after this Affront,
This foul Indignity, done to my Honour,
Divorcement is but petty Reparation:
But, since thou hast, with Impudence, affirm'd
My false Return, and brib'd my Slaves to vouch it,
The Truth shall, in the Face of Thebes, be clear'd;
Thy Uncle, the Companion of my Voyage.
And all the Crew of Sea-men shall be brought.
Who were embark'd, and came with me to Land,
Nor parted, till I reach'd this cursed Door:
So shall this Vision of my late Return
Stand a detected Lye; and woe to those
Who thus betray'd my Honour.
Sos. Sir, shall I wait on you?
Amph. No, I will go alone: Expect me here. [*Exit Amphitryon.*
Phæd. Please you——that I—— [*To Alcmena.*
Alc. Oh! Nothing now can please me:
Darkness, and Solitude, and Sighs, and Tears,
And all th' inseparable Train of Grief.
Attend my Steps for ever—— [*Exit Alcmena.*

G, Page 273.

Dryden has imitated, as follows, the third scene of the same Act of Molière's *Amphitryon*. Cleanthis is, for the nonce, called Bromia.

Bro. Now you are snuffling upon a cold Scent, for some pitiful Excuse: I know you: Twenty to one, but you will plead Drunkenness: You are us'd to be Pot-valiant.

Sos. I was pumping, and I thank her, she has invented for me.—Yes, Bromia, I must confess I was exalted; and, possibly, I might scour

upon thee, or perhaps be a little more familiar with thy Person, by the way of Kindness, than if I had been sober; but, pr'ythee, inform me what I did; that I may consider what Satisfaction I am to make thee.

Bro. Are you there at your Dog-tricks? You wou'd be forgetting wou'd you? like a drunken Bully that affronts over Night, and, when he is call'd to Account the next Morning, remembers nothing of the Quarrel, and asks Pardon, to avoid Fighting.

Sos. By Bacchus, I was overtaken; but I shou'd be loth that I committed any Folly with thee.

Bro. I am sure, I kept myself awake all Night, that I did, in Expectation of your coming. [*Crying.*

Sos. But what amends did I make thee, when I came?

Bro. You know well enough, to my Sorrow; but that you play the Hypocrite.

Sos. I warrant, I was monstrous kind to thee.—

Bro. Yes, monstrous kind indeed: You never said a truer Word: for, when I came to kiss you, you pull'd away your Mouth, and turned your Cheek to me.

Sos. Good.

Bro. How, Good? Here 's fine Impudence: He justifies!——

Sos. Yes, I do justify, that I turn'd my Cheek, like a prudent Person, that my breath might not offend thee: for now I remember I had eaten Garlick.

Bro. Ay, you remember and forget, just as it makes for you or against you: but, to mend the Matter, you never spoke one civil Word to me; but stood like a Stock, without Sense or Motion.

Sos. Yet better. [*Aside.*

Bro. After which, I lovingly invited you to take your Place in your Nuptial Bed, as the Laws of Matrimony oblige you: and you inhumanly refus'd me.

Sos. Ay, there's the main Point of the Business! Art thou morally certain that I refused thee? Look me now in the Face, and say I did not commit Matrimony with thee!

Bro. I wonder how thou canst look me in the Face after that Refusal!

Sos. Say it once again, that I did not feloniously come to Bed to thee!

Bro. No, thou cold Traitor, thou know'st thou did not.

Sos. Best of all; 'twas discreetly done of me to abstain.

Bro. What, do you insult me too?

Sos. No, I do not insult you; but—

Bro. But what! How was it discreetly done then? Ha!

Sos. Because it is the receiv'd Opinion of Physicians . . .

Bro. A receiv'd Opinion . . . The Devil take the Physicians, for meddling in our Matters: If a Husband will be rul'd by them, there are five Weeks of Abstinence in Dog-days too . . .

Sos. Let the Physicians alone; they are honest Men, whatever the World says of 'em. But, for a certain Reason, that I best know, I am glad that Matter ended so fairly and peaceably betwixt us.

Bro. Yes, 'twas very fair and peaceably; to strike a Woman down, and beat her most outrageously.

Sos. Is it possible that I drubb'd thee?

Bro. I find your Drift: You wou'd fain be provoking me to a new Trial now: But, i'faith, you shall bring me to no more Handy-blows: I shall make bold to trust to my Tongue hereafter: You never durst have offer'd to hold up a Finger against me, till you went a Trooping.

Sos. Then I am a Conqueror: And I laud my own Courage: This Renown I have atchiev'd by Soldiership and Stratagem. Know your Duty, Spouse, henceforward, to your supreme Commander.

[*Strutting.*

H, Page 277.

In the first Scene of the fourth Act of *Amphitryon*, Dryden follows Molière's play (Act ii., Scene 6) of the same name. Cleanthis is here called Phædra.

JUPITER *following* ALCMENA; MERCURY, *and* PHÆDRA.

Jup. O stay, my dear Alcmena, hear me speak.
Alc. No, I wou'd fly thee to the Ridge of Earth,
And leap the Precipice, to scape thy Sight.
Jup. For Pity——
Alc. Leave me, thou ungrateful Man.
Jup. I cannot leave you: No, but like a Ghost,
Whom your Unkindness murder'd, will I haunt you.
Alc. Once more, be gone, I'm odious to myself,
For having lov'd thee once.
Jup. Hate not the best and fairest of your Kind:
Nor can you hate your Lover, tho' you wou'd:
Your Tears, that fall so gently, are but Grief:
There may be anger; but there must be Love.
The Dove, that murmurs at her Mate's Neglect,
But counterfeits a Coyness, to be courted.
Alc. Courtship from thee, and after such Affronts!
Jup. Is this the everlasting Love you vow'd,
Last Night, when I was circled in your Arms?
Remember what you swore——
Alc. Think what thou wert, and who cou'd swear too much?
Think what thou art, and that unswears it all.
Jup. Can you forsake me, for so small a Fault?
'Twas but a Jest, perhaps too far pursu'd;
'Twas but, at most, a Trial of your Faith,

How you could bear Unkindness:
'Twas but to get a reconciling Kiss,
A wanton Stratagem of Love.

Alc. See how he doubles, like a hunted Hare;
A Jest, and then a Trial, and a Bait;
All Stuff and Daubing!

Jup, Think me Jealous, then.

Alc. O that I could, for that's a noble Crime;
And which a Lover can with ease, forgive:
'Tis the high Pulse of Passion in a Fever;
A sickly Draught, but shews a burning Thirst;
Thine was a Surfeit, not a Jealousy:
And in that Loathing of a full-gorg'd Love,
Thou saw'st the nauseous Object, with Disdain.

Jup. O think not that: For you are ever new:
Your Fruits of Love are like eternal Spring
In happy Climes, where some are in the Bud,
Some green, and ripening some, while others fall

Alc. Ay, now you tell me this,
When rous'd Desires, and fresh Recruits of Force,
Enable languish'd Love to take the Field.
But never hope to be receiv'd again:
You would again deny you were receiv'd,
And brand my spotless Fame.

Jup. I will not dare to justify my Crime,
But only point you where to lay the Blame:
Impute it to the Husband, not the Lover.

Alc. How vainly wou'd the Sophister divide,
And make the Husband, and the Lover, two.

Jup. Yes, 'tis the Husband is the guilty Wretch,
His Indolence forgot the Sweets of Love,
And deeming them his Due, despis'd the Feast,
Not so the famish'd Lover cou'd forget:
He knew he had been there, and had been blest
With all that Hope cou'd wish, or sense can bear.

Alc. Husband and Lover, both alike I hate.

Jup. And I confess I have deserv'd that Hate:
Too charming Fair, I kneel for your Forgiveness:
I beg by those fair Eyes, [*Kneeling.*
Which gave me Wounds, that Time can never cure;
Receive my Sorrows, and restore my Joys.

Alc. Unkind, and cruel! I can speak no more.

Jup. O give it vent, Alcmena, give it vent;
I merit your Reproach, I wou'd be curs'd:
Let your Tongue curse me, while your Heart forgives.

Alc. Can I forget such Usage?

Jup. Can you hate me!
Alc. I'll do my best: for sure I ought to hate you.
Jup. That Word was only *hatch'd upon your Tongue*,
It came not from your Heart. *But try again*,
And if, once more, you can *but say, I hate you*,
My Sword shall do you Justice.
Alc. Then, I hate you——
Jup. Then you pronounce the Sentence of my Death?
Alc. I hate you much, but yet I love you more.
Jup. To prove that Love, then say, that you forgive me:
For there remains but this Alternative;
Resolve to pardon, or to punish me.
Alc. Alas, what I resolve, appears too plain:
In saying that I cannot hate, I pardon.
Jup. But what's a Pardon worth, without a Seal?
Permit me, in this Transport of my Joy—— [*Kisses her hand.*
Alc. Forbear; I am offended with myself.
[*Putting him gently away with her hand.*
That I have shewn this Weakness—Let me go,
Where I may blush, alone—— [*Going and looking back on him.*
But come not you;
Lest I should spoil you, with excess of Fondness,
And let you love again—— [*Exit Alcmena.*
Jup. Forbidding me to follow, she invites me: [*Aside.*
This is the Mould of which I made the Sex:
I gave 'em but one Tongue, to say us Nay;
And two kind Eyes, to grant. Be sure that none [*To Mercury.*
Approach, to interrupt our Privacy.

I, Page 285.

Dryden, in his *Amphitryon*, has followed Molière's second scene of the third act of the same play. It is found also in Plautus.

Mercury. Oh, here's Amphitryon again, but I'll manage him above in the Balcony. [*Exit Mercury.*
Amphitryon. Not one of those I look'd for, to be found!
As some Enchantment hid 'em from my Sight!
Perhaps, as Sosia says, 't is Witchcraft all:
Seals may be open'd, Diamonds may be stol'n;
But how I came, in Person, yesterday,
And gave that Present to Alcmena's Hands,
That which I never gave, nor ever came,
O there's the Rock, on which my Reason splits.
Wou'd that were all! I fear my Honour, too!
I'll try her once again: She may be mad:

A wretched Remedy; but all I have,
To keep me from Despair.

Merc. [*From the Balcony, aside.*] This is no very charitable Action of a God, to use him ill, who has never offended me: but my Planet disposes me to Malice; and when we great Persons do but a little Mischief, the World has a good Bargain of us.

Amph. How now! what means the locking up of my Doors, at this Time of Day? [*Knocks.*

Merc. Softly, Friend, softly: You knock as loud, and as saucily, as a Lord's Footman, that was sent before him, to warn the Family of his Honour's Visit. Sure you think the Doors have no Feeling! What the Devil are you, that rap with such Authority?

Amph. Look out, and see: 't is I.

Merc. You, what you?

Amph. No more, I say, but open.

Merc. I'll know to whom first.

Amph. I am one that can command the Doors open.

Merc. Then you had best command them, and try whether they will obey you.

Amph. Dost thou not know me?

Merc. Pr'ythee, how should I know thee? dost thou take me for a Conjurer?

Amph. What's this, Midsummer-Moon? Is all the World gone a Madding? why Sosia!

Merc. That's my Name indeed: didst thou think I had forgot it?

Amph. Dost thou see me?

Merc. Why, dost thou pretend to go invisible? If thou hast any Business here, dispatch it quickly; I have no Leisure to throw away upon such prattling Companions.

Amph. Thy Companion, Slave? How dar'st thou use this insolent Language to thy Master?

Merc. How! Thou my Master? By what Title? I never had any other Master but Amphitryon.

Amph. Well: and for whom dost thou take me?

Merc. For some Rogue or other; but what Rogue I know not.

Amph. Dost thou not know me for Amphitryon, Slave!

Merc. How shou'd I know thee, when I see thou dost not know thyself? Thou Amphitryon? In what Tavern hast thou been? and how many Bottles did thy Business, to metamorphose thee into my Lord?

Amph. I will so drub thee for this insolence!

Merc. How now, Impudence! are you threatening your Betters! I shou'd bring you to condign Punishment, but that I have a great Respect for the good Wine, tho' I Find it in a Fool's Noddle.

Amph. What, none to let me in? why Phædra! Bromia!

Merc. Peace, Fellow; if my Wife hears thee, we are both undone. At a word, Phædra and Bromia are very busy; one in making a Caudle

for my Lady, and the other in heating Napkins, to rub down my Lord, when he rises from Bed.

Amph. Amazement seizes me.

Merc. At what art thou amaz'd? My Master and my Lady had a falling out, and are retir'd, without Seconds to decide the Quarrel. If thou wert not a meddlesome Fool, thou wouldst not be thrusting thy Nose into other Peoples' Matters. Get thee about thy Business, if thou hast any; for I'll hear no more of thee. [*Exit Mercury from above.*

Amph. Brav'd by my Slave, dishonour'd by my Wife,
To what a desp'rate Plunge am I reduc'd,
If this be true the Villain says? But why
That feeble If! It must be true; she owns it.
Now, whether to conceal, or blaze th' Affront?
One way, I spread my Infamy abroad;
And, t'other, hide a burning Coal within,
That preys upon my Vitals: I can fix
On nothing, but on Vengeance.

J, Page 288.

Dryden has imitated this scene from Molière's *Amphitryon* (Act iii., Scene 4). Naucrates is called Tranio. Gripus is a character not found in Molière.

Enter to him SOSIA, POLIDAS, GRIPUS, *and* TRANIO.

Gripus. Yonder he is; walking hastily to and fro, before his Door; like a Citizen, clapping his Sides before his Shop, in a frosty Morning; 't is to catch a Stomach, I believe.

Sosia. I begin to be afraid, that he has more Stomach to my Sides and Shoulders, than to his own Victuals. How he shakes his Head! and stamps, and what Strides he fetches! He 's in one of his damn'd Moods again; I don't like the Looks of him.

Amphitryon. Oh, my mannerly, fair-spoken, obedient Slave, are you there! I can reach you now, without climbing: Now we shall try who 's drunk, and who 's sober.

Sos. Why this is as it should be: I was somewhat suspicious that you were in a pestilent Humour: yes, we will have a Crash at the bottle, when your Lordship pleases: I have summon'd 'em you see: and they are notable Topers, especially Judge Gripus.

Grip. Yes, faith; I never refuse my Glass, in a good Quarrel.

Amph. [*To Sosia.*] Why, thou insolent Villain; I'll teach a Slave how to use his Master thus.

Sos. Here 's a fine Business towards! I am sure I ran as fast as ever my Legs could carry me, to call 'em: nay you may trust my Diligence, in all Affairs belonging to the Belly.

Grip. He has been very faithful to his Commission, I'll bear him witness.

Amph. How can you be Witness where you were not present? the Balcony! Sirrah, the Balcony!

Sos. Why, to my best Remembrance, you never invited the Balcony.

Amph. What Nonsense dost thou plead for an Excuse of thy foul Language, and thy base Replies!

Sos. You fright a Man out of his Senses, first; and blame him afterwards, for talking Nonsense:—but 'tis better for me to talk Nonsense, than for some to do Nonsense; I will say that, whate'er comes on't. Pray, Sir, let all Things be done decently: what, I hope, when a Man is to be hang'd, he is not truss'd upon the Gallows like a dumb Dog, without telling him wherefore.

Amph. By your Pardon, Gentlemen; I have no longer Patience to forbear him.

Sos. Justice, Justice: my Lord Gripus; as you are a true Magistrate, protect me. Here's a Process of Beating going forward, without Sentence given.

Grip. My Lord Amphitryon, this must not be: Let me first understand the Demerits of the Criminal.

Sos. Hold you to that Point, I beseech your Honour, as you commiserate the case of a poor, innocent Malefactor.

Amph. To shut the Door against me, in my very Face, to deny me Entrance, to brave me from the Balcony, to laugh at me, to threaten me: what Proofs of Innocence call you these? but if I punish not this Insolence—[*Is going to beat him, and is held by Polidas and Tranio*] I beg you let me go——

Sos. I charge you in the King's Name, hold him fast; for you see he's bloodily dispos'd.

Grip. Now, what hast thou to say for thyself, Sosia?

Sos. I say, in the first Place, be sure you hold him, Gentlemen; for I shall never plead worth one Farthing, while I am bodily afraid.

Pol. Speak boldly; I warrant thee.

Sos. Then if I may speak boldly, under my Lord's Favour, I do not say he lyes neither; no, I am too well bred for that; but his Lordship fibbs most abominably.

Amph. Do you hear his Impudence? yet will you not let me go?

Sos. No impudence at all, my Lord: for how cou'd I, naturally speaking, be in the Balcony and affronting you; when at the same time I was in every Street of Thebes, inviting these Gentlemen to Dinner?

Grip. Hold a little: how long since was it that he spoke to you, from the said Balcony?

Amph. Just now; not a Minute before he brought you hither.

Sos. Now speak my Witnesses.

Grip. I can answer for him, for this last half hour.

Pol. And I.

Tran. And I.

Sos. Now judge equitably, Gentlemen; whether I was not a civil well-bred Person, to tell my Lord he fibbs only?

Amph. Who gave you that Order, to invite 'em?

Sos. He that best might; yourself: by the same token, you bid old Bromia provide and 'twere for a God; and I put in for a Brace, or a Leash; no, now I think on't, it was for ten Couple of Gods, to make sure of Plenty.

Amph. When did I give thee this pretended Commission?

Sos. Why, you gave me this pretended Commission, when you were just ready to give my Lady the Fiddles and a Dance . . .

Amph. Where, in what Place, did I give this Order?

Sos. Here, in this Place, in the presence of this very Door, and of that Balcony: and if they cou'd speak, they wou'd both justify it.

Amph. O Heaven! these Accidents are so surprising, the more I think of 'em, the more I am lost in my Imagination.

Grip. Nay, he has told us some Passages, as he came along, that seem to surpass the Power of Nature.

Sos. What think you now, my Lord, of a certain twin Brother of mine, called Sosia? 'tis a fly Youth: pray Heav'n you have not just such another Relation, within Doors, call'd Amphitryon. It may be it was he, that put upon me, in your Likeness: and perhaps he may have put something upon your Lordship too, that may weigh heavy upon the Forehead.

Amph. [*To those who hold him*] Let me go——Sosia may be innocent, and I will not hurt him:——Open the Door, I'll resolve my Doubts immediately.

Sos. The Door is peremptory that it will not be open'd without Keys: and my Brother, on the inside, is in possession; and will not part with 'em.

Amph. Then 'tis manifest that I am affronted; break open the Door there.

Grip. Stir not a Man of you, to his Assistance.

Amph. Dost thou take part with my Adultress too, because she is thy Niece?

Grip. I take Part with nothing, but the Law; and to break the Doors open, is to break the Law.

Amph. Do thou command 'em then?

Grip. I command nothing without my Warrant; and my Clerk is not here to take his Fees for drawing it.

Amph. [*Aside*] The Devil take all Justice-brokers:—I curse him too when I have been hunting him all over the Town, to be my Witness! ——But I'll bring Soldiers to force open the Doors, by my own Commission. [*Exit Amphitryon.*

Sos. . . . These Forms of Law, to defeat a Man of a Dinner, when he's sharp set; 'tis against the Privilege of a Free-born Stomach; and is no less than Subversion of Fundamentals. [*Jupiter above in the Balcony.*

K, Page 290.

Molière's fifth Scene of the third Act of *Amphitryon* is imitated, as follows, by Dryden.

Jup. Oh, my Friends, I am sorry I have made you wait so long: you are welcome; and the Door shall be open'd to you, immediately.

[*Exit Jupiter.*

Grip. Was not that Amphitryon?

Sos. Why, who shou'd it be else?

Grip. In all Appearance it was he: but how got he thither?

Pol. In such a Trice too!

Tran. And after he had just left us!

Grip. And so much alter'd, for the better, in his Humour?

Sos. Here's such a Company of foolish Questions, when a Man's a hungry: You had best stay Dinner till he has prov'd himself to be Amphitryon in Form of Law! But I'll make short Work of that Business: for I'll take mine Oath 'tis he.

Grip. I should be glad it were.

Sos. How glad it were? with your damn'd Interrogatories, when you ought to be thankful, that so it is.

Grip. [*Aside*] That I may see my Mistress Phædra, and present her with my great gold Goblet.

Sos. If this be not the true Amphitryon, I wish I may be kept without Doors, fasting and biting my own Fingers, for want of Victuals; and that's a dreadful Imprecation! I am for the inviting, and eating, and treating Amphitryon: I am sure 'tis he that is my lawfully begotten Lord: and if you had an Ounce of true Justice in you, you ought to have laid hold on t' other Amphitryon, and committed him for a Rogue, and an Impostor, and a Vagabond.

[*The Door is open'd: Mercury from within.*

Merc. Enter quickly, Masters: The Passage on the Right-hand leads to the Gallery, where my Lord expects you——For I am call'd another way. [*Gripus, Tranio, and Polidas go into the House.*

L, Page 294.

This sixth Scene of the third Act of Molière's Comedy is imitated, as follows, by Dryden.

Sos. I should know that Voice, by a secret Instinct: 'Tis a Tongue of my Family; and belongs to my Brother Sosia: It must be so; for it carries a cudgelling Kind of Sound in it——But put the worst: Let me weigh this matter wisely: Here 's a Beating and a Belly-full, against no Beating, and no Belly-full. The Beating is bad, but the Dinner is good: Now, not to be beaten, is but negatively good; but

not to fill my Belly, is positively bad. Upon the whole matter, my final Resolution is, to take the Good and the Bad as they come together.

[*Is ent'ring:* MERCURY *meets him at the Door.*

Mer. Whither now, you Kitchen-scum? From whence this Impudence, to enter here without Permission?

Sos. Most illustrious Sir: My Ticket is my Hunger: Show the full Bowels of your Compassion to the empty Bowels of my Famine.

Mer. Were you not charg'd to return no more? I 'll cut you into Quarters, and hang you upon the Shambles.

Sos. You 'll get but little Credit by me: Alas, Sir, I am but mere Carrion! Brave Sosia, compassionate Coward Sosia: And beat not thyself, in beating me.

Mer. Who gave you that Privilege, Sirrah, to assume my Name? Have you not been sufficiently warned of it, and receiv'd part of Punishment already?

Sos. May it please you, Sir, the Name is big enough for both of us; and we may use it in common, like a Strumpet: Witness Heav'n that I would have obey'd you, and quitted the Title to the Name; but wherever I come, the malicious World will call me Sosia in spite of me: I am sensible there are two Amphitryons; and why may not there be two Sosias? Let those two cut one another's Throats at their own Pleasure: But you and I will be wiser, by my Consent, and hold good Intelligence together.

Mer. No, no; two Sosias would but make two Fools.

Sos. Then let me be the Fool; and be you the prudent Person; and chuse for yourself some wiser Name: Or you shall be the eldest Brother; and I'll be content to be the younger; tho' I lose my Inheritance.

Mer. I tell thee I am the only Son of our Family.

Sos. Ah! Then let me be your Bastard Brother . . . I hope that's but reasonable.

Mer. No, thou shalt not disgrace my Father: For there are few Bastards now-a-days worth owning.

Sos. Ah! poor Sosia! What will become of thee?

Mer. Yet again profanely using my proper Name?

Sos. I did not mean myself: I was thinking of another Sosia, a poor Fellow, that was once of my Acquaintance, unfortunately banish'd out of Doors, when Dinner was just coming upon the Table.

M, Page 298.

Dryden imitates, as follows, the last Scene from Molière's play, which is found also in Plautus.

A second peal of Thunder, after which, JUPITER *appears in a Machine.*

Jup. Look up, Amphitryon, and behold above
Th' Impostor God, the Rival of thy Love:
In thy own Shape see Jupiter appear,

And let that Sight secure thy jealous Fear.
Disgrace and Infamy are turn'd to Boast;
No Fame, in Jove's Concurrence, can be lost:
What he enjoys, he sanctifies from Vice;
And by partaking, stamps into a Price.
'Tis I, who ought to murmur at my Fate,
Forc'd by my Love, my Godhead to translate:
When on no other Terms I cou'd possess,
But by thy Form, thy Features, and thy Dress:
To thee were giv'n the Blessings that I sought,
Which else, not all the Bribes of Heav'n had bought.
Then take into thy Arms thy envy'd Love,
And, in his own Despite, triumph o'er Jove.

Mer. [*Aside*] Amphitryon and Alcmena both stand Mute, and know not how to take it.

Sos. [*Aside*] Our Sovereign Lord Jupiter is a fly Companion; he knows how to gild a bitter Pill.

Jup. From this auspicious Night shall rise an Heir,
Great, like his Sire, and like his Mother, Fair:
Wrongs to redress, and Tyrants to disseize;
Born for a World that wants a Hercules.
Monsters, and Monster-men he shall engage,
And toil, and struggle, thro' an impious Age.
Peace to his Labours shall at length succeed;
And murm'ring Men, unwilling to be freed,
Shall be compell'd to happiness by Need.

[*Jupiter is carry'd back to Heaven.*

Omnes. We all congratulate Amphitryon.

Mer. Keep your Congratulations to yourselves, Gentlemen: 'Tis a nice point, let me tell you that; and the less that is said of it, the better. Upon the whole Matter, if Amphitryon takes the Favour of Jupiter in Patience, as from a God, he's a good Heathen.

Sos. I must . . . produce a Squire to attend on young Hercules, when he goes out to seek Adventures: that when his Master kills a Man, he may stand ready to pick his Pockets; and piously relieve his aged Parents. Ah, Bromia, Bromia, if thou hadst been as handsome and as young as Phædra; I say no more, but somebody might have made his Fortunes as well as his Master, and never the worse Man neither.

For, let the wicked World say what they please,
The fair Wife makes her Husband live at Ease.

GEORGE DANDIN ; OU, LE MARI CONFONDU.

COMÉDIE.

GEORGE DANDIN ; OR, THE ABASHED HUSBAND.

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

JULY 18TH, 1668.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle having been ratified on the 2d of May 1668, and peace being assured, at least for some time, Louis XIV. resolved to give a festival in his favourite gardens of Versailles, as he had already done in 1664. (See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*, Vol. III., page 3). This festival was held on the 18th of July, 1668, and Molière's comedy, *George Dandin*, formed the chief entertainment. Our author took the plot chiefly from one of his early farces, *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé*, in which a wife, who comes home rather late, finds the door shut, and threatens to kill herself if her husband does not let her in. She pretends to do so; the good man rushes out of the house quite terrified; the wife, meanwhile, sneaks in, and he in his turn is locked out. This idea is found in an Indian tale, in *le Roman de Dolopathos*, written in the beginning of the thirteenth century, and also in the fourth story of the seventh day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. But Molière thought very likely that this plot was too slight for a comedy, and added to it a second idea, which exists in all literatures, namely, the danger of inequality of rank or education in marriage. Most probably, he took it from the eighth story of the seventh day of the *Decameron*, in which is related how Arriguccio Berlinghieri, a rich merchant, married a noble lady, named Sismonda. His wife deceives him; he thinks he has found her out, cuts off all her hair, gives her a sound beating, and even disfigures her. But when he returns with her family—a mother and three brothers—his wife appears in all her beauty and with all her hair, because she had bribed one of her servants to take the well-deserved punishment in her stead. Hereupon the wife accuses her husband of being a drunkard; he is soundly rated both by the mother and the three brawny brothers, and warned not to misbehave again.

The whole of the play is rather extravagant, but it is full of humour; the characters are very well drawn, and the dialogue is spirited. The servant girl Claudine is certainly one of the most impudent hussies whom even Molière has sketched; whilst the family de Sotenville faithfully represent the poor but proud French provincial nobles, as they existed in Molière's time.

It cannot be denied that the impression which *George Dandin* leaves upon our minds is not a healthy one, and that the triumph of an adulterous

woman over a husband, who, after all, is only guilty of having married above his station, cannot be justified. But, in extenuation, we may say that *George Dandin* was written only for a courtly "high jinks;" to excite the laughter of a public, whose risible muscles were not easily moved; and that, after all, the ideas about matrimonial fidelity were not the same at the court of Louis XIV. as they are at the present time amongst civilised nations. The same year (1668) in which Molière's play was acted before the Court, Madame de Montespan, a married woman, became the recognised mistress of the *Grand Monarque*, whilst, later, her children by that King became *enfants légitimés de France.*

This piece was only performed in the theatre of the Palais Royal on the 9th of November,—precisely two months after the first representation of *The Miser.* Grimarest relates an anecdote about Molière, which seems to me very unlike his character, namely, that he read his comedy to a real Dandin before giving it to the public, in order to conciliate the foolish husband, who appears to have been a man of some influence; and that the latter became one of the warmest patrons of the play.

Several English dramatists have imitated this piece. Betterton, the actor, wrote a partial imitation of it, which, under the name of *The Amorous Widow, or The Wanton Wife,* was brought out at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in 1670. As Molière's play is in three acts, and Betterton's in five, the latter tacked an underplot to it, consisting of an amorous widow, vastly "prone to an iteration of nuptials," and who at last, not finding any one willing to marry her, takes up with the Viscount Sans Terre, who proves to be a falconer in disguise, and is a reminiscence of the Marquis de Mascarille and the Viscount de Jodelet in *The Pretentious Young Ladies.* (See Vol. I., page 209.) Geneste says,[1]—"That part of it which is taken from *George Dandin* is very good, the other part of it is indifferent."[2]

On the 18th of April 1781, was represented at Covent Garden Theatre *Barnaby Brittle, or a Wife at her Wit's end,* a farce in two acts, altered from Molière and Betterton. It is a condensation of Molière's play, with something added from Mrs Centlivre's *Artifice,* namely, the scene when the servant Jeremy brings his Mistress' clogs on a plate, and the one in which Mrs Brittle pretends to have broken her leg. Barnaby is a glassman.

A farce, called *George Dandin,* was also acted once at Drury Lane Theatre, November 25, 1747; but it has never been printed.

Dibdin, in *The Metamorphoses* (see Introductory Notice to *The*

[1] Geneste, *Some Account of the English Stage,* 1832, 10 vols., I. 108.

[2] In the British Museum, there is a copy of *The Amorous Widow,* printed in 1729, the fourth edition, with the names of three London printers, and containing the Prologue and Epilogue totally different from the copy in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, published in London in the year 1710, "now first printed from the original copy," and which contains a descriptive list of Dramatis Personæ, wanting in the first mentioned copy, but has neither Prologue nor Epilogue. I have followed the earlier printed copy.

Sicilian, page 49) has imitated from Molière's play, the second Scene of the first Act and the seventh Scene of the second Act. The hero is called, in the English play, Don Pedro, and the loutish servant, Perez.

An operatic farce, *December and May*, written by Dimond, and founded on Molière's comedy, was brought out on the 16th of May 1818, at Covent Garden Theatre. The only novelty in it is that Zodolet, the servant of the fast young nobleman, is partly bribed and partly frightened to bear false witness.

What is taken from Molière will be found in the Appendix.

In the fifth volume of the translation of "Select Comedies of Mr. de Molière, published in London, 1732," *George Dandin* has a most impudent dedication to the Right Honourable the Lady * * * *

MADAM,

There's no body to whom this *Play* can with so much Propriety be addressed, as to your LADYSHIP, whose real Story abounds with more *Intrigue* and *Contrivance* than all that the fruitful Fancy of *Molière* has been able to invent.

Your dexterous Management of an Husband is so extraordinary, that other Wives behold it with Envy and Emulation; your Example plainly shewing, that a Woman may heartily despise her Husband and at the same time make him believe she loves him, and that Matrimony is so far from restraining that it may be made even subservient to Gallantry.

An Husband not over-wise is a Conveniency your LADYSHIP well knows how to make the proper Use of—Most People were indeed surpriz'd at your marrying Mr * * * * *; but you, *Madam*, (whose Schemes are beyond the Reach of Common Capacities) easily foresaw the Advantage of being the Wife of one whom Your superior Rank and Alliances would overawe, whom Your Wit would intirely direct and govern, and whose large Fortune would supply the necessary Expences of a fine Lady.

I shall attempt no farther a Task I am unequal to, but leave the World to praise You as You deserve: Permit me only to declare, that I am, with a great deal of Admiration, MADAM, *Your Ladyship's most obedient, and most humble Servant*, THE TRANSLATOR.

As we have already mentioned, Molière's play formed part of the court entertainment, of which a description was published in 1668, under the name of *Relation de la Fête de Versailles*. This narrative was written by Félibien, but the verses, by Molière. We here give a *résumé* of the official description:—

"Having granted peace at the instance of his allies and at the desire of all Europe; having given marks of an unexampled moderation and kindness, even in the midst of his most glorious conquests, the king had no other thought than to apply himself to the affairs of his kingdom, when, in order to make up a little for the pleasures which the court had lost during his absence in carnival time, he resolved to give a fête in the gardens of Versailles, where, amidst the pleasures to be found in so delicious a retreat, the mind could not fail to be charmed with those many astonishing and extraordinary beauties with which this great prince knew so well how to season all his entertainments.

"To attain this effect, wishing to have a comedy after a collation, and

the supper after the comedy, to be followed up by a ball and display of fireworks, he selected those persons whom he thought most capable of performing these things properly. He himself marked out for them those spots, the situation of which he deemed most suitable, from their natural beauty, to contribute advantageously to their decoration; and because one of the most beautiful ornaments of this house is the quantity of water which art has brought there, notwithstanding that nature had not provided it, his Majesty ordered them to make the utmost use of it to enhance the embellishment of said spots, and even gave them the means to employ it, and to obtain the greatest possible effects from it.

"For the execution of this fête, the duke de Créquy, as first gentleman of the chamber, was charged with everything that belonged to the comedy; the marshall de Bellefonds, as first steward of the royal household, took care of the collation, of the supper, and of everything that belonged to the service of the table; and Monsieur Colbert, as superintendent of the royal buildings, had the different places for the royal entertainment constructed and embellished, and gave the orders for the performance of the display of fireworks. The sieur Vigarani was commanded to arrange the theatre for the comedy; the sieur Gissey to prepare a room for the supper; and the sieur Le Vau, first architect of the king, another for the ball.

"On Wednesday, the eighteenth day of July, the king came from Saint Germain to dine at Versailles with the queen, Monseigneur the dauphin, Monsieur and Madame. The remainder of the court having also arrived immediately after mid-day, were met by the king's officers, who did the honours, and received everybody in the salons of the castle, where in several places, were tables for refreshment; the principal ladies were conducted to the private apartments to take some rest.

"At six o'clock at night, the king having given the order to the marquis de Gesvres, the captain of his guards, to have all the doors thrown open, so that there might be nobody that did not take part in the entertainment, walked out of the castle with the queen and the rest of the court, to amuse themselves with a promenade."

Félibien, after having followed the king through all the particulars of his promenade, and having described the splendour of the theatre constructed in the garden, continues, as follows:—

"Though the piece represented must be regarded as an *impromptu*, and one of these works, in which the necessity to satisfy the orders of the king on the spot, leaves not always time completely to finish and to polish it, it is nevertheless certain that it is composed of parts so diversified and pleasant, that we may safely say that none have appeared on the stage so well calculated to please the eyes and ears of the spectators at the same time. The prose which has been employed is a very fit language for the action it represents, and the verses which are sung between the acts of the comedy, accord so well with the subject, and express so tenderly the

passions with which they who recite them must be moved, that there never has been heard anything more stirring. Though it appears that there are two comedies, which are being played at the same time, one of which is in prose and the other in verse, they are however so well adapted to the same subject, that they make but one piece, and represent but one action. The overture of the stage is performed by four shepherds, disguised as servants of the fête, who, accompanied by four other shepherds, playing upon the flute, perform a dance, in which they force a rich peasant, whom they have met, to take a part, and who, dissatisfied with his marriage, has his head full of annoying thoughts; therefore he very soon retires from their society where he only remained by compulsion.

"Climène and Chloris, who are two companion shepherdesses, hearing the sound of the flutes, come to add their voices to the instruments, and sing—

The other day, I heard
Annette's voice, who,
Whilst playing on the bagpipe,
Was singing in our woods:
O love, how 'neath thy sway
One suffers poignant grief!
I may well say it,
Since I feel it.
At the same moment
Young Lisette,
In the same rhythm as Annette,
Responded tenderly.
O love, if 'neath thy sway,
I suffer poignant grief,
It is because I dare not say
All that I feel.

"Tircis and Philène, the lovers of those two shepherdesses, accost them to tell them of their passion, and go through a musical scene with them.

Chloris. Leave us in peace, Philène.

Climène. Tircis, do not stop my way.

Tircis and Philène. Ah, cruel fair one, vouchsafe one moment to listen to me.

Climène and Chloris. But what have you to say?

The two shepherds. Oh with what immortal flame, my heart burns 'neath your sway.

The two shepherdesses. That is nothing new. You have told me so a thousand times.

Philène. [*To Chloris*] What! do you wish me to love all my lifetime and obtain nothing?

Chloris. No, that is not my wish. Love no longer ; I am satisfied.

Tircis. [*To Climène*] Heaven forces me to pay you the homage, of which all these woods are witness.

Climène. Then it is for Heaven, since he constrains you, to pay you for your trouble.

Philène. [*To Chloris*] It is by your extraordinary merits, that you have won my affection.

Chloris. If I deserve to be loved, I owe nought to your affection.

The two Shepherds. The dazzle of your eyes kills me.

The two Shepherdesses. Then turn away from me.

The two Shepherds. But I like to look at them.

The two Shepherdesses. Then, shepherd, do not complain.

Philène. Ah ! charming Climène !

Tircis. Ah ! charming Chloris !

Philène. [*To Climène*] Render her a little more human towards me.

Tircis. [*To Chloris*] Make her less contemptuous towards me.

Climène. [*To Chloris*] Be sensible to the love that Philène has for you.

Chloris. [*To Climène*] Be sensible to the ardour by which Tircis is smitten.

Climène. [*To Chloris*] If you will show me your example, shepherdess, perhaps I shall follow it.

Chloris. [*To Climène*] If you will resolve to go first, it is possible that I may follow you.

Climène. [*To Philène*] Farewell, shepherd.

Chloris. [*To Tircis*] Farewell, shepherd.

Climène. [*To Philène*] Await a favourable turn.

Chloris. [*To Tircis*] Await a sweet success for the grief which you feel.

Tircis. I await no remedy.

Philène. And I await nought but death.

Tircis and Philène. Since we are doomed to languish under such disgrace, let us, by dying, make an end to our grievous sighing.

"These two shepherds retire, their hearts big with grief and despair ; and, following up this music, the first act of the comedy in prose begins.

"The subject of it is that a rich farmer, having married the daughter of a country gentleman, gets nothing but contempt from his wife, as well as from his father-in-law and mother-in-law, who had only accepted him as their son-in-law for his large property.

"The whole of this piece is treated in the same style in which the sieur de Molière is accustomed to construct his other stage plays ; which means, that he portrays in the most natural colours the characters of the personages whom he introduces ; so much so, that nothing has ever been seen more closely resembling the vexations in which people often find themselves who marry above their station, than what he has written ; and when he depicts the humour and manners of certain provincial

nobles, he forms no traits but what perfectly convey their true portraits. At the end of the act the peasant is interrupted by a shepherdess, who comes to tell him of the despair of the two shepherds; but being troubled with other concerns, he leaves her in anger; thereupon Chloris enters, lamenting the death of her lover in the following verses :—

Ah ! mortal grief,
What else can still befall me ?
Flow on, flow on, my tears ;
I cannot shed too many.
Why does a tyrannical honour
Hold our soul bound in slavery ?
Alas ! in order to satisfy its cruel harshness,
I have driven my lover to abandon life.
Ah ! mortal grief !
What else can still befall me ?
Flow on, flow on, my tears ;
I cannot shed too many.
Can I ever forgive myself, in this fatal affair,
The severe coolness with which I had armed myself ?
Why then, my dear lover ! have I given you up to death !
Is that, alas ! the price for having loved me so much ?
Ah ! mortal grief !
What else can still befall me ?
Flow on, flow on, my tears ;
I cannot shed too many.

" After this lament began the second act of the prose comedy. It is a continuation of the annoyances of the married peasant, who is once more interrupted by the same shepherdess, who comes to tell him that Tircis and Philène are not dead, but have been saved by the boatmen who accompany her. The peasant, worried by all these importunities, retires and leaves the place free to the boatmen, who, delighted with the reward they have received, execute a dance, and go through various evolutions with their boathooks, after which the third act of the prose comedy is played.

" In this last act, the peasant is seen overwhelmed with grief, through the bad behaviour of his wife. Finally, one of his friends advises him to drown his sorrows in the winecup, and takes him with him to join his troupe, having just perceived the advent of the crowd of amorous shepherds, who enter and begin to celebrate, with songs and dances, the power of Love.

" Here the scenery is changed instantaneously ; and it is hardly to be conceived how so many real water-jets disappear so suddenly, or by what artifice, instead of all the alleys and harbours, one sees nothing but grand rocks, interspersed with trees, on which are shepherds who

dance, and play on all sorts of instruments. Chloris is the first to join her voice to the sound of the flutes and bagpipes.

Chloris.

In this spot the shadow of the elms
Imparts a freshness to the grass;
And the banks of those streams
Are brilliant with a thousand flowerets,
Which are reflected in the water.
Shepherds, take your bagpipes,
Attune your piping reeds,
And let us mix our songs
With those of the little birds.
Zephyr, through these streams
Takes a thousand secret windings,
And the young nightingales
Impart their love-breathing ditties
To the tender branches.
Shepherds, take your bagpipes,
Attune your piping reeds,
And let us mix our songs
With those of the little birds.

"While the music continues to charm the ears, the eyes are no less agreeably occupied in seeing several elegantly dressed shepherds and shepherdesses perform a dance, while Climène sings—

Ah! how sweet is it, charming Sylvia.
Ah! how sweet is it to be inflamed by love.
That time of life, which is not spent like this,
Should be deducted from our days.

Chloris.

Ah! the sweet days which Love vouchsafes us,
When his burning torch unites two hearts!
Is there either glory or crown
Which can compare with his least delights?

Tircis.

How unjustly we complain of a martyrdom
Which is followed by such sweet delights!

Philène.

One moment's happiness, in love's empire,
Repays ten years of sighing.

All together.

Let us all sing Love's admirable power;
In this spot let us all sing
His glorious charms.
He is the most amiable,
As well as the greatest of all the gods.

"At these words, there was seen to approach, from the back of the stage, a great rock, planted with trees, on which was seated the whole troupe of Bacchus, composed of forty satyrs. One of them obtrudes his head, and proudly sings the following words—

Stay! this is too much to venture.
Another god, whose edicts we follow,
Opposes himself to the honour, which
Your pipes and voices dare offer unto Love.
To such exalted titles Bacchus alone pretends;
And we are here to defend his rights.

Chorus of Satyrs.

We the delightful sway of Bacchus follow
In every spot we bow
To his glorious attractions.
He is the most amiable,
And greatest of all the gods.

"Several of the Bacchus party accompany the music with their dance; and then was seen a combat between the Bacchanalian dancers and singers, and those who upheld the honour of Love.

Chloris.

It is Spring which restores life
To our fields strewn with flowers,
But it is Love and his torch
That re-animates our hearts.

A follower of Bacchus.

The sun disperses the shadows
With which the Heavens are obscured,
And from the most sombre hearts
Bacchus drives care away.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Bacchus is worshipped, on the earth and on the waves.

The followers of Love.

And Love is the god who is adored everywhere.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Bacchus has yoked beneath his sway the whole world.

The followers of Love.

And Love has vanquished gods as well as men.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Nothing can equal his matchless sweetness.

The followers of Love.

Nothing can equal his precious charms.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Fie upon Love, and upon his flames.

The followers of Love.

Ah! what pleasure it is to love!

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Ah! what pleasure it is to drink!

The followers of Love.

To him who lives without love, life has no charms.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

To live and not to drink is simply to die.

The followers of Love.

Sweet, charming bonds!

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Sweetest of victories.

The followers of Love.

Ah! what pleasure it is to love!

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Ah! what pleasure it is to drink!

The two Chorusses together.

No, no, it is a mistake,
The greatest god of all . . .

The followers of Love.

Is Love.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Is Bacchus.

"Upon this a shepherd arrives, who throws himself between the two contending parties to separate them, and who sings these verses.

Shepherds! this is too much. He! why this contention?
Let reason make but one assembly of us.
Love has his charms, Bacchus has his attractions.
They are two deities, who go very well together;
Let us not divide them.

The two Chorusses.

Let us therefore join their amiable attractions,
Let us join our voices in this delightful spot,
And let us make the surrounding echoes repeat
That nought is sweeter than Bacchus and Love.

"All these dancers join together, and amidst the shepherds and shepherdesses are seen four followers of Bacchus, with thyrses, and four bacchantes, carrying a kind of tambourines, which are intended to represent the sieves, formerly used at the feasts of Bacchus. With these thyrses the followers strike on the sieves of the bacchantes, and arrange different postures, while the shepherds and shepherdesses dance more calmly.

"It may be safely asserted that in this work, the sieur Lulli has found the secret of satisfying and delighting everybody, for never has anything so beautiful and so well conceived been witnessed. As regards the dances, there are no steps, but what express the action which the dancers are to carry out, and no gestures but what are as so many unspoken words. If we come to judge the music, there is nothing but what conveys perfectly the passions, and which does enchant the spectators.

"But what had never been seen before is the harmony of voices so agreeable, the symphony of the instruments, the beautiful blending of the different chorusses, the sweet songs, the dialogues so tender and amorous, those echoes; and, in short, the admirable management in every part, in which, from the first recitals, the music goes on increasing, from having begun with one single voice, ended in a concert of nearly a hundred persons, which on one stage, and at the same time, were seen to join their instruments, their voices, and their movements in the finale of the piece, leaving everybody in such an admiration as would be difficult to express."

The narrative then continues to describe the beauty of the decorations, gives the name of the ladies who were honoured with an invitation to the table of the king to supper,[3]—Louis XIV. and his brother, being the only two gentlemen,—gets enthusiastic over the different

[3] Among the ladies invited at the king's table I see the name of the Duchess de la Vallière, who was then only tolerated, but not that of Madame de Montespan, at that time the *Grand Monarque's* mistress.

dishes, and a wonderful rock on which was stuck pastry, preserves, and candied fruit "which seemed to grow among the stones and to belong to it," tells us that the queen presided at one table, and that there were a great many other tables laden with eatables, wines, liqueurs, and many other delicacies "which showed that the magnificence of the king was lavished everywhere," becomes quite lyric when giving the details of a room made of foliage, in which were waterworks wonderful to behold; and in which their Majesties and the whole court had a ball; and is full of fervour when graphically delineating the astonishing fireworks, when all kinds of monsters vomited rockets, &c.

M. Félibien ends thus:—"People can see that his Majesty performs all his actions with equal grandeur, and that he is inimitable, whether in peace or in war. However much I have endeavoured to describe this beautiful fête, I acknowledge that my description is very imperfect; people cannot form any idea whatever, by what I have written, of the reality."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GEORGE DANDIN, *a rich farmer, husband to Angélique.*[4]
M. DE SOTENVILLE, *a country gentleman, Angélique's father.*
CLITANDRE, *in love with Angélique.*
LUBIN, *a peasant, Clitandre's servant.*
COLIN, *George Dandin's servant.*
ANGÉLIQUE, *George Dandin's wife.*
MADAM DE SOTENVILLE.
CLAUDINE, *Angélique's maid.*

THE SCENE IS BEFORE GEORGE DANDIN'S HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY.

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[4] Molière played this part himself. His dress for this part consisted, according to M. E. Soulié's inventory, so often quoted, of "breeches and cloak of light brown taffeta, with collar of the same; the whole adorned with lace and silver buttons, a belt of the same; a little doublet of crimson silk; another doublet of brocade of different colours and silver lace, to wear over it; a large ruff and shoes." Dandin is, according to Nicot, *Trésor de la langue française*, published in 1606, used to designate a man who foolishly and open-mouthed stares about, *ineptus* and *insipidus*. Rabelais uses this word in the twenty-fifth chapter of the first book of *Gargantua*, which Sir Thomas Urquhart translates "ninny lobcock." He employs *Dandin* also as the proper name of a judge and his son, because it is supposed that this judge used to dangle his legs about, just as the sound of the bells seemed to go, *din, dan, din* (*Pantagruel*, 3, 41). Racine calls his judge in the *Plaideurs*, Perrin Dandin, so does La Fontaine in his fable of *L'Huître et les Plaideurs*. In old French, *dandeau* was said of a wilful cuckold. Etienne Pasquier (1529-1615) connects it with *dindan*, the noise produced by ringing the bells; and Hensleigh Wedgwood, in his *Dictionary of English Etymology*, states that the French words *dodiner*, to rock, to shake; *dandiner*, to sway the body to and fro; *dodeliner*, to rock or jog up and down, to dandle; *dondeliner*, to wag the head; and the Italian *dondolare*, to dandle a child, to loiter; and *dondola*, a toy, a child's playing baby, are all more or less connected with the English words "dandle" and "dandy."

GEORGE DANDIN; OR, THE ABASHED HUSBAND.

(GEORGE DANDIN : OU, LE MARI CONFONDU.)

ACT I. SCENE I.

GEORGE DANDIN, *alone.*

AH! what a strange thing it is to be a woman of quality[5] and a wife! and what an instructive lesson my marriage is to all peasants who wish to raise themselves above their condition, and to ally themselves, as I have done, to a nobleman's family. Nobility, in itself, is good; it is a thing worthy of respect, surely: but it is attended by so many ugly circumstances, that it is better not to come in contact with it. I have become very knowing on that subject, to my cost, and understand now the way of noblemen, when they allow us to enter their families. We ourselves count for very little in the match: they only marry our property; and I would have done much better, rich as I am, to marry a good and honest peasant's daughter, than to take a wife who holds herself above me, is ashamed to bear my name, and imagines that with all my wealth I have not paid dear enough for the honour of being her husband. George Dandin! George Dandin! you have committed the greatest folly in the world. My home has become unbearable to me now, and I never enter it without finding some annoyance.[6]

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[5] The original has *femme demoiselle.* See Vol. I., note 15, page xxx.

[6] Strepsiades, the principal character of Aristophanes' comedy, *The Clouds,* utters the same complaint, and for the same reason.

SCENE II.

GEORGE DANDIN, LUBIN.[7]

Dan. [*Aside, seeing Lubin come out of his house*] What the devil can that fellow want in my house?

Lub. [*Aside, perceiving George Dandin*] There is someone looking at me.

Dan. [*Aside*] He does not know me.

Lub. [*Aside*] He suspects something.

Dan. [*Aside*] Bless my soul! he will barely nod to me.

Lub. [*Aside*] I am afraid he will say that he saw me come from within.

Dan. Good day to you.

Lub. Your servant.

Dan. You do not belong to this place, I believe?

Lub. No: I have come only to see the feast to-morrow.

Dan. Just tell me, if you please, did not you come out thence?

Lub. Hush!

Dan. Why so?

Lub. Be quiet!

Dan. What is the matter?

Lub. Not a word! You must not say that you saw me come out there.

Dan. Why?

Lub. Good Heavens! because . . .

Dan. Well? What?

Lub. Softly. I am afraid they will hear us.

Dan. Not at all, not at all.

Lub. Because I have just been delivering a message to the mistress of the house from a certain gentleman who has an eye upon her; and it must not be known. Do you understand?

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[7] See Appendix, Note A.

Dan. Yes.

Lub. I have been told to take care that no one should see me; and let me beg of you, at least, not to say that you have seen me.

Dan. I do not mean to.

Lub. I am very glad to do things secretly, as I have been told.

Dan. That is all right.

Lub. The husband, from what they tell me, is dreadfully jealous, who will not allow his wife to be made love to; and there would be the devil to pay if it came to his ears. Now, do you understand ?

Dan. Very well.

Lub. He is to know nothing of all this.

Dan. To be sure.

Lub. They wish to deceive him quietly. You understand me ?

Dan. Perfectly.

Lub. If you go and say that you have seen me come out of his house, you will spoil the whole affair. Do you understand ?

Dan. Indeed, I do. What is the name of him who sent you there ?

Lub. He is our squire, Viscount of . . . somebody . . . By my troth ! I never remember how the deuce they manage to pronounce that name. Mr Cli . . . Clitandre.

Dan. Is it that young courtier who lives . . . ?

Lub. Yes; not far from those trees.

Dan. [*Aside*] That is why this civil young spark has come to live so close to me. I smelt a rat, certainly; and his vicinity had already given me some suspicions.

Lub. Gadzooks ! he is the most gentlemanlike man you ever met with. He has given me three gold pieces only to go and tell the lady that he is in love with her, and that

he very much wishes the honour of being able to speak with her. It was not much trouble to be so well paid for it, compared with a day's work, for which I get only ten sous.

Dan. Well! have you delivered your message?

Lub. Yes. I found inside a certain Claudine, who understood directly what I wanted, and who gained me speech with her mistress.

Dan. [*Aside*] Oh! what a jade that maid is!

Lub. Odds bobs! this Claudine is as pretty as can be: I have taken a fancy to her, and it will be her fault if we are not married.

Dan. But what answer has the mistress made to this Mr Courtier.

Lub. She has told me to tell him . . . stop; I do not know if I shall remember it all: that she is very much obliged to him for his affection towards her, and that he must be very careful not to show it, on account of her husband, who is whimsical, and that he must bethink himself to invent something, so that they may converse with each other.

Dan. [*Aside*] Ah! baggage of a wife![8]

Lub. Jeminy! that will be funny; for the husband will not dream of the trick: that is the best of it, and he will be taken in for all his jealousy. Is it not so?

Dan. That is true.

Lub. Good-bye. Keep silence, mind! Keep the secret well, so that the husband may not know of it.

Dan. Yes, yes.

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[8] Aimé-Martin says that the resemblance between *George Dandin* and *The School for Wives* (see Vol. II., p. 137) has struck all commentators of Molière. Dandin is always told of the faithlessness of his wife, just as Arnolphe is about the stratagems of Agnès. Neither of them, however, succeeds in surprising the guilty.

Lub. As for myself, I shall pretend to know nothing. I am a cunning fellow, and people would not think that I have anything to do with it.

SCENE III.

GEORGE DANDIN, *alone.*

Well! George Dandin, you see how your wife treats you! That is your reward for having wished to marry a lady of quality! You are completely done for,[9] without being able to revenge yourself; and nobility ties your hands. Equality of condition leaves the husband at any rate the freedom of resentment; and if this were a country wench, you would now have full liberty to right yourself by giving her a good thrashing. But you wished to have a taste of nobility; and you were tired of being master in your own house. Ah! I am bursting with rage, and would willingly box my own ears. What! to listen impudently to the declaration of some fop, and to promise him at the same time that his love would be returned! Zounds! I will not let such an opportunity slip me. I must, at this very moment, go and complain to her father and mother, and take them to witness, at all events, of the vexations and annoyance which their daughter causes me. But here they come, just at the right moment.

SCENE IV.

M. DE SOTENVILLE, MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.[10]

M. de S. What is the matter, son-in-law? You seem quite upset.

Dan. So I have cause to be, and . . .

[9] The original has *L'on vous accommode de toutes pièces,* because, in former times, a knight completely armed was called so.

[10] See Appendix, Note B.

Mad. de S. Good Heavens! son-in-law, how unpolite you are, not to bow to people when you approach them!

Dan. Upon my word! mother-in-law, it is because I have other matters to think of; and . . .

Mad. de S. Again! Is it possible, son-in-law, that you know fashion so little, and is there no teaching you how to behave among people of quality.

Dan. What do you mean?

Mad. de S. Will you never divest yourself, with me, of the familiarity of that word, mother-in-law, and can you not accustom yourself to call me Madam?

Dan. Zounds! If you call me your son-in-law, it seems to me that I may call you my mother-in-law.

Mad. de S. That remains to be seen, and the case is not the same. Please to understand that it is not for you to use that word with a person of my rank; that, although you may be our son-in-law, there is a great difference between us, and that you ought to know your place.

M. de S. That is enough, my love; let us drop that.

Mad. de S. Good Heavens! M. de Sotenville, you are more indulgent than any one else, and you do not know how to make people give you your due.

M. de S. Egad! I beg your pardon: I do not require any lessons upon that subject; and during my life, I have shown by a score of energetic actions, that I am not a man ever to abate a tittle of my pretentions; but a hint is quite sufficient for him. Let us know a little, son-in-law, what you have got on your mind.

Dan. Since I am to speak categorically, I shall tell you, M. de Sotenville, that I have cause to . . .

M. de S. Gently, son-in-law. Let me tell you that it is not respectful to address people by their names, and that we must only say, "Sir," to those above us.

Dan. Well then, only say Sir, and no longer M. de Sotenville, I must tell you that my wife gives me . . .

M. de S. Softly! Let me also tell you that you ought not to say my wife when you speak of our daughter.

Dan. I have no patience! What! is not my wife my wife?

Mad. de S. Yes, son-in-law, she is your wife; but you must not call her so. You could not do more, if you had married one of your equals.

Dan. [*Aside*] Ah! George Dandin, what a hole you have got into! [*Aloud*] For gracious sake, put your gentility aside for a moment, and allow me now to speak to you as best I can. [*Aside*] A plague upon all this nonsensical tyranny! [*To M. de Sotenville*] I tell you then that I am very much dissatisfied with my marriage.

M. de S. And the reason, son-in-law?

Mad. de S. What! to speak thus of an affair from which you have derived such great advantages!

Dan. And what advantages, Madam, since "Madam" it is to be? The bargain has not been a bad one for you; for, by your leave, your affairs, had it not been for me, would have been in a very dilapidated condition, and my money has served to stop pretty large gaps; but, as for myself, what have I profited by it, pray, unless it be the lengthening of my name, and instead of being George Dandin, to have received, through you, the title of M. de La Dandinière?

M. de S. Do you reckon for nothing, son-in-law, the advantage of being allied to the house of Sotenville?

Mad. de S. And to that of La Prudoterie, from which I have the honour of being descended; a house where the females ennoble, and which, by that valuable privilege, will make your sons noblemen.[11]

[11] The contrary was generally the law in France; for if a lady of noble birth married a commoner, she lost her own rank, and her children

Dan. Oh ! that is good, my sons shall be noblemen ; but I shall be myself a cuckold, unless care be taken.

Mad. de S. What does this mean, son-in-law ?

Dan. It means that your daughter does not behave as a wife ought to do, and that she does things which are contrary to honour.

Mad. de S. Gently. Take care what you are saying. My daughter belongs to a race too full of honour, ever to do aught that might offend honesty ; and as for the house of La Prudoterie, thank Heaven, it has been observed that for more than three hundred years no woman has been talked about.

M. de S. Egad ! there has never been a flirt in the house of Sotenville ; and bravery is not more hereditary in the males than chastity in the females.

Mad. de S. We have had a Jacqueline de la Prudoterie, who would never be the mistress of a duke and peer, governor of our province.

M. de S. There was a Mathurine de Sotenville who refused twenty thousand crowns from a favourite of the King, who asked only for the favour of speaking to her.

Dan. Well ! your daughter is not so straight-laced as all that ; and she has grown tractable since she has been with me.

M. de S. Explain yourself, son-in-law. We are not people to support her in any wrong actions, and we would be the first, her mother and I, to do you justice.

Mad. de S. We do not understand jesting in matters of

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became commoners. But exceptionally, it was the custom in the province of Champagne that the children born either from a father or mother of noble rank, became nobles themselves. According to tradition, this privilege was granted to the inhabitants of that province, because they had lost so many men of high birth in the battle of Fontenay (841), near Auxerre, fought between Charles the Bald and his brothers.

honour; and we have brought her up in the greatest possible strictness.

Dan. All I can tell you is, that there is a certain courtier thereabout, whom you have seen, who is in love with her, under my very nose, and who has sent her a declaration of his love, to which she has very feelingly listened.

Mad. de S. By the Heavens above! I would strangle her with my own hands, were she to deviate[12] from her mother's virtuous path.

M. de S. Zounds, I would pass my sword through her body, and that of her gallant, were she to forfeit her honour.

Dan. I have told you what is going on, to justify my complaints; and I ask you for satisfaction in this matter.

M. de S. Do not torment yourself: I will get it you from both; and I am the man to keep a tight hold over,[13] no matter whom. But are you quite positive about what you have told us?

Dan. Quite.

M. de S. Take great care; for, between gentlemen, these are ticklish subjects; and you must not make a mistake.

Dan. I have said nothing, I tell you, but the truth.

M. de S. My love, go and talk to your daughter, while I, with my son-in-law, will go and speak with that man.

Mad. de S. Is it possible, my son, that she could so far

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12 The original has *forligner*, an antiquated word, which means, literally, "to deviate from the line." It was applied to nobles who had degenerated.

13 In the original *serrer le bouton*, literally, "to tighten the leathern buckle which holds the reins together;" hence, figuratively, to keep a tight hold over any one.

forget herself, after the good example which, as you well know, I have set her.

M. de S. We are going to clear the matter up. Follow me, son-in-law, and do not trouble yourself. You shall see what we are made of, when people attack those who may belong to us.

Dan. There he is coming towards us.

SCENE V.

M. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN.[14]

M. de S. Do you know me, Sir?

Clit. Not that I am aware of, Sir.

M. de S. My name is the Baron de Sotenville.

Clit. I am very happy to hear it.

M. de S. My name is well known at court; and, in my youth, I had the honour of being one of the first to distinguish myself in the arrière-ban[15] at Nancy.

Clit. So much the better.

M. de S. My father, Jean-Gilles de Sotenville, had the honour of assisting in person at the great siege of Montauban.[16]

Clit. I am delighted to hear it.

M. de S. And one of my ancestors, Bertrand de Sotenville, enjoyed so much consideration in his time, that he was permitted to dispose of all his property, to cross the seas.

Clit. I can easily believe it.

M. de S. It has been reported to me, Sir, that you are in love with, and run after a young person, who is my daughter, in whom I am interested [*pointing to George*

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[14] See Appendix, Note C.

[15] The *arrière-ban* was the convocation originally made by the King of all the nobles of his states, to march against the enemy.

[16] The siege alluded to here is no doubt the one undertaken by Louis XIII. in 1621, about a year before Molière's birth.

Dandin], as well as in this man whom you see, who has the honour of being my son-in-law.

Clit. Who? I?

M. de S. Yes; and I am glad of the opportunity of speaking to you, in order to have this affair explained, if you please.

Clit. What strange slander is this! Who has told you that, Sir?

M. de S. Somebody who believes himself well informed.

Clit. This somebody has told a lie. I am a gentleman. Do you think me capable, Sir, of such a base act? What! I, love a young and handsome person who has the honour of being the daughter of the Baron de Sotenville! I respect you too much for that, and am too much your humble servant. Whoever has told you this is a fool.

M. de S. Now, son-in-law.

Dan. What?

Clit. He is a rogue and a villain.

M. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Answer him.

Dan. Answer him yourself.

Clit. If I knew who it could be, I would in your presence run my sword through his body.

M. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Support your assertion.

Dan. It is fully supported. It is true.

Clit. Is it your son-in-law, Sir, who . . .

M. de S. Yes, it is he himself, who complains to me about it.

Clit. Certainly he may thank his stars for belonging to you; and without that, I would pretty well teach him to talk in such a manner about a person like me.

SCENE VI.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.[17]

Mad. de S. With regard to that, jealousy is a strange thing! I have brought my daughter here, to clear the matter up in the presence of every one.

Clit. [*To Angélique*] It is you then, Madam, who have told your husband that I am in love with you.

Ang. I? And how could I have told him? Is it so then? I should really like to see you in love with me. Just attempt it, pray; you will find out with whom you have to deal; I advise you to try the thing! Have recourse, by way of experiment, to all the lovers' stratagems: just attempt to send me, for the fun of it, some messages, to write me some small love letters secretly; to watch the moments of my husband's absence, or when I am going out to tell me of your love: you have only to set about it, I promise you you shall be received as you ought.

Clit. Gently, gently, Madam; there is no need to read me such a lesson, or to be so scandalised. Who told you that I thought of loving you?

Ang. How do I know, who told me just now these stories?

Clit. They may say what they like; but you know best whether I ever spoke of love to you when we met.

Ang. You should only have done so, you would have been welcome!

Clit. I assure you that you have nothing to fear from me; that I am not a man to vex the fair; and that I respect you and your parents too much, to have even the thought of falling in love with you.

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[17] See Appendix, Note D.

Mad. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Well now you see!

M. de S. Are you satisfied, son-in-law? What do you say to that?

Dan. I say that these are cock-and-bull stories; that I know what I know; and that, since I am to speak plainly, she has just now received a message from him.

Ang. What, I have received a message?

Clit. I have sent a message?

Ang. Claudine?

Clit. [*To Claudine*] Is it true?

Clau. Upon my word, that is a strange falsehood!

Dan. Hold your tongue, slut that you are. I know your tricks; and it is you who introduced the messenger just now.

Clau. Who? I?

Dan. Yes, you. Do not look so innocent.

Clau. Alas! how full of wickedness people are now-a-days to suspect me thus, I, who am innocence itself!

Dan. Hold your tongue, you bad lot. You pretend to be a saint, but I have known you for a long time; and you are a sly jade.

Clau. [*To Angélique*] Madam, have I . . .

Dan. Hold your tongue, I tell you; you may bear the brunt for all the others; and your father is not a nobleman.

Ang. It is a falsehood so gross, and which affects me so much, that I have not even the strength to answer it. It is very horrible to be accused by a husband, when one has done nothing wrong to him! Alas! if I am to blame at all, it is for treating him too well.

Clau. Indeed you have.

Ang. My great misfortune is that I consider him too much; and would to Heaven that I could tolerate, as he says, the attentions of some one else! I should not be so much to be pitied. Good-bye; I withdraw, and I cannot longer bear to be thus insulted.

SCENE VII.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

Mad. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Go, you do not deserve the virtuous wife you have got.

Clau. Upon my word, he deserves that she should make his words come true: and if I were in her place, I would not hesitate about it. [*To Clitandre*] Yes, sir, you ought to make love to my mistress, to punish him. Insist, it is I who tell you; it will be worth your while; and I offer to assist you, since he has already taxed me with it.

[*Exit Claudine.*

M. de S. You deserve, son-in-law, to have these things said to you; and your behaviour sets every one against you.

Mad. de S. Go, endeavour to treat a gentlewoman better; and take care not to make any more such blunders for the future.

Dan. [*Aside*] It makes me mad to be put in the wrong, when I am in the right.

SCENE VIII.

M. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN.

Clit. [*To M. de Sotenville*] You see, Sir, how falsely I have been accused; you are a gentleman who know the punctilios of honour; and I demand satisfaction for the insult that has been offered to me.

Mad. de S. That is just; and it is the right way of proceeding. Come, son-in-law, give this gentleman satisfaction.

Dan. How! satisfaction?

M. de S. Yes, it is his right according to usage, for having wrongly accused him.

Dan. That is something with which I do not at all agree, that I have wrongly accused him ; and I know well enough what I think of it.

M. de S. That does not matter. Whatever thought may remain in your mind, he denies it ; that must satisfy people, and they have no right to complain of any man who gainsays a thing.

Dan. Thus, if I had found him in bed with my wife, he would get off by simply denying it ?

M. de S. No more arguments. Make him the apologies which I tell you.

Dan. I ? I am to make him apologies after . . .

M. de S. Come, I tell you ; there is nothing to hesitate about, and there is no need of being afraid of overdoing the thing, since you are guided by me.

Dan. I cannot . . .

M. de S. Zounds ! son-in-law, do not make me angry. I shall be taking his part against you. Come, be guided by me.

Dan. [*Aside*] Ah ! George Dandin !

M. de S. First, take your cap in hand : This gentleman is a nobleman, and you are not.

Dan. [*Cap in hand, aside*] I am boiling with rage !

M. de S. Repeat after me : Sir . . .

Dan. Sir . . .

M. de S. I crave your pardon . . . [*Seeing that George Dandin hesitates to obey*] Ah !

Dan. I crave your pardon . . .

M. de S. For the bad thoughts which I have had of you.

Dan. For the bad thoughts which I have had of you.

M. de S. It was because I had not the honour of knowing you.

Dan. It was because I had not the honour of knowing you.

M. de S. And I beg you to believe . . .

Dan. And I beg you to believe . . .

M. de S. That I am your servant.

Dan. Would you have me to be the servant of a man who wants to make me a cuckold?

M. de S. [*Threatening him again*] Ah!

Clit. It is sufficient, Sir.

M. de S. No. I will have him finish it, and that everything should be done in due form: That I am your servant.

Dan. That I am your servant.

Clit. [*To George Dandin*] Sir, I am yours with all my heart; and shall think no more of what has happened. [*To M. de Sotenville*] As for you, Sir, I wish you good-day, and am sorry that you have had some annoyance.

M. de S. I kiss your hand; and, whenever you like, shall give you some sport in coursing.

Clit. You do me too much honour. [*Exit Clitandre.*

M. de S. That is how things ought to be managed, son-in-law. Farewell. Remember that you have entered a family that will support you, and not suffer you to be affronted.

SCENE IX.

GEORGE DANDIN, *alone.*

Ah! that I . . . You would have it so, you would have it so; George Dandin, you would have it so; this suits you very nicely, and you are served right: you have precisely what you deserve. Come, everything depends only on undeceiving the father and mother; and perhaps I may find some means of succeeding.

ACT II. SCENE I.

CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

Clau. Yes, I guessed well enough that it must have come from you, and that you told it to some one, who related it to master.

Lub. Upon my word, I mentioned only a word of it, as I was passing by, to a man, that he might not say that he had seen me come out. People must be great chatterboxes in these parts!

Clau. Really, the Viscount has well chosen his man in taking you for his messenger; and he has employed a fellow who is very lucky.

Lub. Never mind, I shall be more artful the next time, and take greater care.

Clau. Yes, yes, it will be high time!

Lub. Let us speak no more of this. Listen.

Clau. What am I to listen to.

Lub. Turn your face a little towards me.

Clau. Well! what is it?

Lub. Claudine?

Clau. Well?

Lub. Lack-a-day! Do you not know what I mean?

Clau. No.

Lub. I' faiks! I love you.

Clau. Really?

Lub. Yes, the devil take me! you may believe me, as I have sworn it.

Clau. So much the better.

Lub. I feel my heart going pit-a-pat[18] when I look at you.

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[18] The original has *je me sens tout tribouiller le cœur. Tribouiller*, to disturb, to stir, is a very old French verb.

Clau. I am very glad of it.

Lub. What do you do to be so pretty?

Clau. I do like others.

Lub. Look ye here, a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse;[19] if you like, you shall be my wife, I shall be your husband, and we shall be man and wife together.

Clau. Perhaps you will be jealous like master.

Lub. Not at all.

Clau. As for me, I hate your suspicious husbands, and I want one who is frightened at nothing; one so full of confidence and so sure of my chastity, that he could see me in the midst of thirty men without being uneasy.

Lub. Very well; I shall be all that.

Clau. It is the silliest thing in the world to mistrust a wife and to torment her. The truth of the matter is that one gains nothing by it: it only makes us think of harm; and most frequently husbands make themselves what they are by their hubbub.

Lub. Well! I shall leave you free to do whatever you like.

Clau. That is what you should do in order not to be deceived. When a husband relies on our discretion, we take no more liberty than what is right. It is just with them as with those who open their purses to us, saying: take. We use them discreetly, and content ourselves with what is right; but those who cavil with us, we try to fleece them, and do not spare them.

Lub. Be easy, I shall be like those who open their purse; and you have only to marry me.

Clau. Very well! we shall see.

Lub. Come here, Claudine.

Clau. What do you want?

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[19] The original has *il ne faut point tant de beurre pour faire un quarteron*; not so much butter is needed to make a quarter of a pound.

Lub. Come here, I tell you.

Clau. Softly. I do not like fumblers.

Lub. Just a little bit of coddling.

Clau. Let me alone, I tell you; I do not understand these jokes.

Lub. Claudine.

Clau. [*Repulsing Lubin*] Have done!

Lub. Ah! how cross you are with folks! Fie, how disagreeable to refuse people! Are you not ashamed to be so pretty, and not wishing to be caressed? He! there!

Clau. I shall slap your face.

Lub. Oh! how fierce! how savage she is! Fie, out upon you, you cruel minx!

Clau. You are too fast.

Lub. What harm would it do to let me have my way a little?

Clau. You must have patience.

Lub. Only a little kiss on account.

Clau. I am your humble servant.

Lub. Come, Claudine, you can deduct it afterwards.[20]

Clau. Not if I know it! I have been taken in before. Good-bye. Go, and tell the Viscount that I shall take care to deliver his note.

Lub. Good-bye, you cruel fair.

Clau. That is affectionate.

Lub. Good-bye, you rock, you flint, you stone-block, you everything that is hard in the world.

Clau. [*Alone*] I must deliver this to my mistress. . . . But here she comes with her husband: let us get out of the way, and wait until she is alone.

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[20] The original has *sur l'et-tant-moins*, an old law-term.

SCENE II.

GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE.

Dan. No, no; I am not so easily deceived, and I am but too certain that what I have been told is true. I have better eyes than people fancy; and your talk just now has not dazzled me.

SCENE III.

CLITANDRE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN.

Clit. [*Aside, at the far end of the stage.*] Ah! here she is; but her husband is with her.

Dan. [*Without seeing Clitandre*] Underneath all your grimaces, I have perceived the truth of what I have been told and the little respect which you have for the tie that binds us. [*Clitandre and Angélique bow to each other*] Good Heavens! leave your bowing and scraping; it is not that kind of respect of which I am talking, and you need not play the fool with me.

Ang. I! play the fool! Not at all.

Dan. I know your thoughts, and understand . . . [*Clitandre and Angélique bow again*] Again! Come, let us cease joking. I am well aware that you think me much beneath you, on account of your birth, and the respect of which I speak does not concern myself; I mean that which you owe to such sacred ties as those of wedlock. [*Angélique makes a sign to Clitandre*] You need not shrug your shoulders. I am not talking nonsense.

Ang. Who dreams of shrugging her shoulders?

Dan. Good Heavens! I am not blind. I tell you once more that marriage is a bond to which we owe every respect; and that it ill becomes you to behave as you do. [*Angélique nods to Clitandre*] Yes, yes, it is very bad of you; and you need not nod your head, and make faces at me.

Ang. I? I do not know what you mean.

Dan. I know it well enough; and I know your contempt for me too. If I was not born a nobleman, I belong at least to a race on which there is no stain: and the family of the Dandins . . .

Clit. [*Behind Angélique, without being seen by George Dandin*] One moment's conversation!

Dan. [*Without seeing Clitandre*] He?

Ang. What? I did not say a word.

[*George Dandin turns round his wife, and Clitandre retires, making him a profound bow.*

SCÈNE IV.

GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE.

Dan. There he is, prowling about you.

Ang. Well! is it my fault? What do you wish me to do?

Dan. I wish you to do what a wife who only wishes to please her husband should do. Whatever people may say, gallants never trouble a woman unless she wishes it. There are certain sweet looks which attract them, as honey does flies; and virtuous women have a manner that drives them away immediately.

Ang. I drive them away! and for what reason? I am not scandalized at being thought handsome, and it affords me pleasure.

Dan. Just so! But what part would you have the husband act during this gallant performance?

Ang. The part of a sensible man, who is glad to see his wife admired.

Dan. Much obliged. That does not suit me; and the Dandins are not accustomed to that fashion.

Ang. Then the Dandins will be good enough to accus-

tom themselves to it ; for, as to me, I declare that I do not intend to renounce the world, and to bury myself alive with a husband. What ! because a man thinks fit to marry us, everything must be at an end immediately, and we must break off all intercourse with every living being ! This tyranny of husbands is a marvellous thing ; and I think it very kind of them to wish that we should be dead to all amusements ; and that we should live for them only ! I laugh at that, and do not wish to die so young.

Dan. Is it thus that you keep the vows of fidelity which you made to me before the world ?

Ang. I ? I did not make them willingly, and you forced them from me. Did you, before marriage, ask me my consent, and whether I cared for you ? You consulted only my father and mother. In reality, they have married you, and therefore you will do well always to complain to them about the wrongs which you may suffer. As for me, who did not tell you to marry me, and whom you took without consulting my feelings, I do not pretend to be obliged to submit, like a slave, to your will ; and, by your leave, I mean to enjoy the few happy days of my youth, to take the sweet liberties which the age allows me, to see the fashionable world a little, and to taste the pleasure of having pretty things said to me. Prepare yourself for this, for your punishment ; and thank Heaven that I am not capable of something worse.[21]

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[21] One of the commentators of Molière, Petitot, has justly observed that the great difficulty in *George Dandin* was the part of Angélique. If she had been painted as a victim, she might easily have become too interesting ; but, although she states that she was married without having her feelings consulted, she does not pretend to be sacrificed, but simply says that she means to enjoy herself. Later on, we may laugh at the follies and at the humiliations of George Dandin ; but we can never approve of the tricks which his wife plays. She does not show any delicacy, and takes advantage of the credulity of her parents, and the weakness of her husband, whom she wishes above all to make her very

Dan. Indeed! that is how you take it? I am your husband, and tell you that I do not understand this.

Ang. I, I am your wife, and tell you that I understand it perfectly well.

Dan. [*Aside*] I have a great mind to beat her face to a jelly, and to bring it to a condition never more to charm those gallant sparks. Ah! come, George Dandin; you can hardly restrain yourself, and you had better leave the place.

SCENE V.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

Clau. I have been on the tenterhooks for him to go, Madam, to give you this note from you know who.

Ang. Let us see. [*She reads softly.*

Clau. [*Aside*] To judge by appearances, what he tells her seems not at all displeasing.

Ang. Ah! Claudine, how prettily this note is worded! How agreeable these courtiers are in all their words and in all their actions! And what, after all, are our country people compared with them?

Clau. I think that, after having seen them, the Dandins hardly please you.

Ang. Remain here: I am going to answer it.

Clau. [*Alone*] I have no need, I think, to recommend her to make it agreeable. But here he comes . . .

SCENE VI.

CLITANDRE, LUBIN, CLAUDINE.

Clau. Really, Sir, you have chosen a clever messenger.

Clit. I dared not send one of my own servants; but I

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humble servant. Molière's genius was the first to represent upon the stage a woman deceiving her husband, and yet not enlisting the sympathies of the audience.

must reward you, my pretty Claudine, for the good services which you have rendered me. [*He feels in his pocket.*

Clau. Eh! Sir, there is no occasion for it. No, no, Sir, you need not give yourself that trouble; I serve you because you merit it, and because I like you at heart.

Clit. [*Giving her some money*] I am obliged to you.

Lub. [*To Claudine*] As we are going to be married, give it to me, that I may put it with mine.

Clau. I will keep it for you, as well as the kiss.

Clit. [*To Claudine*] Tell me, have you given my note to your charming mistress?

Clau. Yes. She has just gone to answer it.

Clit. But, Claudine, is there no way to speak to her?

Clau. Yes: come along with me; I shall let you speak to her.

Clit. But will she not be displeased? and is there no risk?

Clau. No, no. Her husband is not at home; and, besides, he is not most to be considered; it is her father and mother; and as long as they are prepossessed in favour of their daughter, there is nothing to fear from the rest.

Clit. I trust myself to your guidance!

Lub. [*Alone*] Odds boddikins, what a clever wife I shall have! She has wit enough for four.

SCENE VII.

GEORGE DANDIN, LUBIN.[22]

Dan. [*Softly, aside*] There is my man I saw just now. Would to Heaven he could be brought to bear witness to the father and mother of what they will not believe!

Lub. Ah, there you are, Mr Tittle-tattle, whom I recommended so much not to talk, and who promised so

[22] See Appendix, Note E.

much that he would not! You are a chatterbox, then, and you go and tell again what other people say to you in secret?

Dan. I?

Lub. Yes. You have repeated everything to the husband, and you are the cause of his having made a row. I am glad to know what a tongue you have got; and it will teach me not to tell you anything more.

Dan. Listen, friend.

Lub. If you had not blabbed, I would have told you what is going on just now; but, for your punishment, you shall know nothing at all.

Dan. How! What is going on?

Lub. Nothing, nothing. See what you get by chattering; you will not get another taste, so you can smack your lips at it.

Dan. Stop a little.

Lub. Not at all.

Dan. I wish to say only a word to you.

Lub. Nay, nay. You wish to pump me.

Dan. No, it is not that.

Lub. I am not such a fool as I look. I see what you are driving at.

Dan. It is something else. Listen.

Lub. Nothing of the sort. You would like me to tell you that the Viscount gave some money just now to Claudine, and that she has taken him to her mistress. But I am not so silly.

Dan. Pray . . .

Lub. No.

Dan. I will give you . . .

Lub. Fiddlesticks.

SCENE VIII.

GEORGE DANDIN, *alone.*

I could not, with this idiot, make use of the idea which I had. But the fresh intelligence that has escaped him shall serve the same purpose; and if the gallant is indoors, that will be proof enough for the father and mother, and fully convince them of their daughter's shamelessness. The mischief is, that I do not know how to make the best of this piece of news. If I go indoors, the rascal will escape; and however clearly I may see my own dishonour, I shall not be believed on my oath, and I shall be told that I am dreaming. If, again, I fetch my father-in-law and mother-in-law, without being sure of finding the gallant inside, it will be no other thing, and I shall be in the same plight as before. Can I not find out quietly if he be there still? [*After having looked through the key-hole*] Oh Heavens! there is no longer any doubt. I have just seen him through the key-hole. Fate gives me an opportunity of confounding my adversary; and, to complete the adventure, it sends the judges whom I need at the right moment.

SCENE IX.

M. DE SOTENVILLE, MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

Dan. Just now, you would not believe me, and your daughter got the better of me; but at present I have proofs at hand how she serves me; and, thank Heaven, my dishonour is so plain now, that you cannot doubt it any longer.

M. de S. How now! son-in-law, you are still harping upon this?

Dan. Yes, I am; and I have never had greater cause to do so.

Mad. de S. You are going once more to cram your nonsense into our heads ?

Dan. Yes, Madam, and they do worse to mine.

M. de S. Are you not weary of making yourself such a nuisance ?

Dan. No ; but I am very weary of being made a dupe of.

Mad. de S. Will you never get rid of your preposterous fancies ?

Dan. No, Madam ; but I would like to get rid of a wife who dishonours me.

Mad. de S. Good Heavens ! son-in-law, be careful how you speak.

M. de S. Zounds ! Try to find some less offensive terms.

Dan. The merchant who loses cannot laugh.

Mad. de S. Remember that you have married a lady of noble birth.

Dan. I remember it well enough, and shall remember it only too much.

M. de S. If you do remember it, endeavour to speak of her more respectfully.

Dan. But why does she not endeavour to treat me more honestly ? What ! because she is a lady of noble birth, is she to be free to do as she likes to me, without my daring to say a word ?

M. de S. What is the matter with you, and what can you say ? Did you not see, this morning, that she denied all knowledge of the person you spoke to me about ?

Dan. Yes. But you, what would you say if I show you at this moment that the gallant is with her ?

Mad. de S. With her ?

Dan. Yes, with her, and in my house.

M. de S. In your house ?

Dan. Yes, in my own house.

Mad. de S. If such be the case, we shall take your part against her.

M. de S. Yes. The honour of our family is dear to us above everything; and if you speak the truth, we shall discard her as our child, and leave her to your resentment.

Dan. You have only to follow me.

Mad. de S. Take care not to be mistaken.

M. de S. Do not do as you did before.

Dan. Good Heavens! you shall see [*Pointing to Clitandre, who comes out of the house with Angélique*] There, have I told a lie?

SCENE X.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, M. DE SOTENVILLE, MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, *with* GEORGE DANDIN *at the farther end of the stage.*[23]

Ang. [*To Clitandre*] Good-bye. I am afraid that you should be caught here, and I have to keep up appearances.

Clit. Promise me, then, Madam, to let me speak to you this night.

Ang. I shall try my best.

Dan. [*To M. and Mad. de Sotenville*] Let us get behind softly, and try not to be seen.

Clau. [*To Angélique*] Ah! Madam, all is lost! Here are your father and mother, and your husband with them.

Clit. Ah, Heavens!

Ang. [*Softly, to Clitandre and Claudine*] Take no notice, and leave it to me. [*Aloud to Clitandre*] What! dare you to behave in such a manner, after the affair of just now?

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[23] See Appendix, Note F.

and is it thus that you disguise your sentiments? I am told that you are in love with me; and that you intend to declare your affection for me; I show my annoyance at it, and explain myself clearly to you before everyone: you stoutly deny the thing, and pledge me your word that you have no thought of offending me; and yet, the self-same day, you have the impudence to come and call upon me, to tell me that you love me, to say a hundred silly things to me to persuade me to respond to your follies: just as if I were a woman to break the vows which I have pledged to my husband, and ever to stray from that virtue which my parents have taught me. If my father knew of this, he would teach you indeed to attempt such things! But an honest woman does not like to make a stir: I do not care to tell him of it; [*Making a sign to Claudine to bring a stick*] and I shall show you that, woman as I am, I have courage enough to revenge myself for the insults offered to me. You have not acted like a nobleman, and therefore I shall not treat you as one. [*Angélique takes the stick, and lifts it against Clitandre, who places himself in such a position that the blows fall upon Dandin.*

Clit. [*Crying as if he had been struck*] Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! gently.

SCENE XI.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

Claud. Strike hard, Madam! lay it on thickly.

Ang. [*Pretending to speak to Clitandre*] If you have anything more on your mind, I am ready to answer you.[24]

[24] In one of Molière's early farces, *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé* (*see* vol. VI.), and which he played in the provinces, the Barbouillé, followed by Villebrequin, his father-in-law, wishes to surprise his wife and her gallant, and receives the blows which she pretends to deal to the latter.

Clau. That will teach you whom you have got to deal with.

Ang. [*Pretending to be surprised*] Ah! father, you here!

M. de S. Yes, daughter, and I am glad to see that in your discretion and courage you show yourself a worthy offspring of the house of Sotenville. Come here; let me embrace you.

Mad. de S. Embrace me also, daughter. There! I weep for joy, and recognise my blood in what you have just now done.

M. de S. Son-in-law, how delighted you ought to be! and how satisfied you should be with this incident! You had just cause to be alarmed; but your suspicions are allayed in the most fortunate manner.

Mad. de S. Without doubt, son-in-law; and you ought now to be the most satisfied of husbands.

Clau. Assuredly. This is what I call a woman! You ought to be only too happy, and kiss the ground she walks on.

Dan. [*Aside*] Oh, you wretch!

Mad. de S. What is the matter, son-in-law? Why do you not thank your wife a little for the affection which you see she shows for you.

Ang. No, no, father, there is no need for that. There is no necessity to thank me for what he has just witnessed; whatever I have done is only out of self-respect.

M. de S. Where are you going, daughter?

Ang. I am going away, father, not to be obliged to receive his compliments.

Claud. [*To George Dandin*] She is right to be angry. She is a woman who deserves to be worshipped; and you do not treat her as you ought.

Dan. [*Aside*] Wicked wretch!

SCENE XII.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

M. de S. She is rather angry at what happened just now, and it will pass away if you caress her a little. Farewell, son-in-law; you see you have no occasion to be any longer uneasy. Go and make it up together, and try to appease her by apologising for your anger.

Mad. de S. You ought to consider that she is a girl strictly brought up, and who is not accustomed to see herself suspected of any bad action. Farewell. I am delighted to see your quarrels ended, and the great joy which her conduct must afford you.

SCENE XIII.

GEORGE DANDIN, *alone.*

I do not say a word, for I should gain nothing by speaking; and never was anything known like my disgrace. Yes, I wonder at my misfortune, and the subtle skill of my jade of a wife to be always in the right, and put me in the wrong. Is it possible that I shall always be outdone by her; that appearances will always go against me, and that I shall never have a chance of proving the guilt of my shameless wife! O Heaven! assist me in my plans, and vouchsafe me the favour of letting the world see that I am dishonoured!

ACT III. SCENE I.

CLITANDRE, LUBIN.

Clit. The night is pretty far advanced, and I am afraid that it is too late. I cannot see where I am going. Lubin!

Lub. Sir?

Clit. Is this the way?

Lub. I think it is. Odds-bobs! This is a silly night, to be so dark as this!

Clit. It is certainly not right; but if, on the one hand, it prevents us from seeing, on the other, it prevents our being seen.

Lub. You are right, it is not so far wrong after all. I should like to know, Sir, you who are so learned, why it is not day at night?

Cli. That is a great question, and one which is difficult to answer. You are inquisitive, Lubin.

Lub. Yes: if I had studied, I should have thought about things of which no one ever thinks now.

Cli. Yes, I believe that. You appear to have a subtle and penetrating mind.

Lub. That is true. Look here, I explain Latin although I never learned it; and the other day, when I saw *collegium* written upon a large door, I guessed that it meant college.

Cli. Marvellous! You can read then; Lubin?

Lub. Yes, I can read print; but I never could learn to read writing.

Cli. We are near the house. [*After clapping his hands*] This is the signal that Claudine has given me.

Lub. Upon my word! she is worth her weight in gold; and I love her with all my heart.

Cli. That is why I took you with me to entertain her.

Lub. Sir, I am . . .

Cli. Hush! I hear a noise.

SCENE II.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE, CLITANDRE, LUBIN.

Ang. Claudine?

Clau. Well?

Ang. Leave the door ajar.

Clau. I have done so. [*They are groping about for each other in the dark.*

Cli. [*To Lubin*] It is they. Hush.

Ang. Hush.

Lub. Hush.

Clau. Hush.

Cli. [*To Claudine, whom he mistakes for Angélique*] Madam !

Ang. [*To Lubin, whom she mistakes for Clitandre*] What ?

Lub. [*To Angélique whom he mistakes for Claudine*] Claudine !

Clau. [*To Clitandre, whom she mistakes for Lubin*] What is it ?

Cli. [*To Claudine, thinking he is speaking to Angélique*] Ah, Madam, how happy you make me !

Lub. [*To Angélique, thinking he is speaking to Claudine*] Claudine ! my poor Claudine !

Clau. [*To Clitandre*] Gently, Sir.

Ang. [*To Lubin*] Softly, Lubin.

Cli. Is it you, Claudine ?

Clau. Yes.

Lub. Is it you, Madam ?

Ang. Yes.

Clau. [*To Clitandre*] You have taken the one for the other.

Lub. [*To Angélique*] Upon my word ! at night one cannot see a bit.

Ang. Is it not you, Clitandre ?

Cli. Yes, Madam.

Ang. My husband is snoring nicely, and I have taken the opportunity for our conversing together.

Cli. Let us look for a seat somewhere.

Clau. That is a good idea. [*Angélique, Claudine and*

Clitandre sit down at the farther end of the stage, upon a piece of turf at the foot of a tree.

Lub. [*Seeking for Claudine*] Claudine! whereabouts are you?

SCENE III.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, *seated at the farther end of the stage,* GEORGE DANDIN, *partly dressed,* LUBIN.

Dan. [*Aside*] I heard my wife go downstairs, and I have quickly dressed myself to go down after her. Where can she have gone to? Has she left the house?

Lub. [*Seeking for Claudine, and catching hold of Dandin for her*] But where are you, Claudine? Ah! here you are. Upon my word! your master is nicely caught, and I think it as funny as the cudgel-blows just now, of which I was told. Your mistress says he is snoring at this moment, like a pig; and he does not know that the Viscount and she are together, while he sleeps. I should like to know what sort of dream he is having now. It is quite laughable. Why does he get it into his head to be jealous of his wife, and to wish to keep her all to himself? It is like his impudence, and the Viscount does him too much honour.[25] You are not saying a word, Claudine? Come let us follow them; and give me your little hand that I may kiss it. Ah! how sweet it is! it is like eating jam. [*To George Dandin, whom he still takes for Claudine, and who rudely repulses him*] The deuce! how you go it, your little hand is mighty hard.

Dan. Who is there?

Lub. No one.

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[25] This is the third time that Lubin has made a confidant of George Dandin, but darkness is the cause of it; twice before it was through Lubin's simplicity.

Dan. He runs away, and leaves me convinced of a fresh deception of my wretch. Come, I must send for her mother and father without delay, so that this adventure may get me separated from her. Hullo! Colin! Colin!

SCENE IV.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN, *still seated at the farther end of the stage*, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

Col. [*At the window*] Sir!

Dan. Quick, come down.

Col. [*Leaping out of the window*] Here I am, I could not come more quickly.

Dan. Are you there?

Col. Ay, Sir.

[*While Dandin looks for Colin on the side where he has heard his voice, Colin crosses to the other, and falls asleep.*

Dan. [*Turning to the side where he believes Colin to be*] Softly. Speak low. Listen. Run to my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and say that I beseech them very urgently to come down here immediately. Do you hear? Come, Colin! Colin!

Col. [*On the other side, waking up*] Sir?

Dan. Where the devil are you?

Col. Here.

Dan. Plague take the booby, who is moving away from me! [*Whilst Dandin returns to the side where he thinks that Colin has remained, Colin, half asleep, crosses over to the other, and falls asleep again*] I say that you are to go directly to my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and tell them that I implore them to come here immediately. Do you understand me? Answer. Colin! Colin!

Col. [*On the other side, waking up*] Sir!

Dan. The scoundrel will drive me mad. Come here, I say ! [*They run against each other, and fall down*] Ah ! the wretch ! he has maimed me. Where are you ? Come here that I may thrash the life out of you. I believe he is running away from me.

Col. Of course I am.

Dan. Will you come here ?

Col. Not likely.

Dan. Come here, I tell you.

Col. Not a bit. You wish to thrash me.

Dan. Well ! I will not thrash you.

Col. For certain ?

Dan. Yes. Come close. [*To Colin, whom he holds by the arm*] Good ! It is lucky that I need you. Go quickly and ask my father-in-law and mother-in-law, in my name, to come down here as soon as possible, and tell them that it is on a matter of the utmost consequence ; and, should they hesitate on account of the time, do not fail to insist upon it, and to give them to understand that it is most important they should come, no matter how they are dressed. You understand me thoroughly now ?

Col. Yes, Sir.

Dan. Get along then, and come back quickly. [*Thinking himself alone*] And I, I will go indoors, to wait till . . . But I hear some one. Can it be my wife ? I must listen, and take advantage of this darkness.

[*He places himself at his door.*

SCENE V.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN, GEORGE DANDIN.

Ang. [*To Clitandre*] Good-bye. It is time to separate now.

Cli. What ! already ?

Ang. We have conversed enough.

Cli. Ah! Madam, can I have enough of your conversation, and find in so short a time all the words I need. It would take whole days to explain to you clearly all that I feel; and I have not told you yet the smallest part of what I have to say to you.

Ang. We shall hear some more at another time.

Cli. Alas! how you pierce my heart when you talk of withdrawing; and with what amount of grief you leave me now!

Ang. We shall find means of seeing each other again.

Cli. Yes. But I cannot help remembering that, when you leave me, you go back to a husband. This thought kills me; and a husband's privileges are cruel things to a fond lover.

Ang. Are you weak enough to have such anxiety, and do you think it possible to love a certain sort of husbands? We marry them, because we cannot help ourselves, and because we depend upon our parents, who look only to riches; but we know how to be even with them, and we take good care not to value them above their deserts.

Dan. [*Aside*] These are our strumpets of wives!

Cli. Alas! it must be admitted that the one they have given you little deserved the honour which he received, and that the union of a woman like you with a man like him is somewhat strange.

Dan. [*Aside*] Poor husbands! that is how they treat you.

Cli. You deserve, no doubt, a quite different lot; Heaven did not create you to be a peasant's wife.

Dan. Would to Heaven she were yours! you would tell a different tale! Let us go in; it is enough.

[*He goes in and locks the door inside.*

SCENE VI.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

Clau. Madam, if you have any harm to say of your husband, you had better make haste, for it is getting late.

Cli. Ah! Claudine, how cruel you are!

Ang. [*To Clitandre*] She is right. We must separate.

Cli. Since you wish it, I must submit to it. But I pray you to pity me, at least, for the wretched moments that I am to pass.

Ang. Farewell.

Lub. Where are you, Claudine, that I may bid you good-night?

Clau. Do not trouble. I accept it at a distance, and send you back the same.

SCENE VII.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

Ang. Let us go in without making a noise.

Clau. The door is shut.

Ang. I have the master-key.

Clau. Then open it softly.

Ang. It is bolted inside, and I do not know what we shall do.

Clau. Call the boy who sleeps there.

Ang. Colin! Colin! Colin!

SCENE VIII.

GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

Dan. [*At the window*] Colin! Colin! Ah! I have caught you at it this time, Mistress Dandin; and you make little escapades[26] while I am asleep. I am very glad of it, and to see you abroad at this hour.

[26] The original has *escampativos*, a burlesque expression, derived from the old French verb *escamper*, to escape, to take flight.

Ang. Well! what great harm is there in taking the fresh air at night?

Dan. Yes, yes. This is the right time to take the fresh air! It is rather the warm air, Mistress Jade; and we know all about the appointment between you and your spark. We heard the whole of your gallant conversation, and the beautiful verses in my praise which you sang to each other. But my consolation is that I am going to be avenged, and that your father and mother will be convinced now of the justice of my complaints, and of your disorderly conduct. I have sent for them, and they will be here in a moment.

Ang. [*Aside*] Oh Heavens!

Clau. Madam!

Dan. That is a blow, doubtless, which you did not expect. It is now my turn to win, and I have the wherewithal to put down your pride, and spoil your stratagems. Up till now, you have laughed at my accusations, thrown dust in your parents' eyes, and patched up your misdeeds. I might see and say what I would, your cunning always got the better of my righteous cause, and you have always found some way to appear in the right; but this time, thank Heaven, matters will be cleared up, and your shamelessness will be quite confounded.

Ang. Pray, let me in.

Dan. No, no: you must wait the arrival of those I have sent for; I wish them to find you out-of-doors at this nice time of night. While you are waiting for them, you had better contrive, if you like, some new scheme to get out of this scrape; to invent some way to palliate your escapade; to find some pretty trick to hoodwink the world and to appear innocent; some specious pretext of a nocturnal pilgrimage, or of some female friend of yours in labour, whom you have just assisted.

Ang. No. I have no intention of disguising anything from you. I do not pretend to defend myself, nor to deny things, since you know them.

Dan. That is because you find no loophole left to you, and that in this affair, you cannot invent an excuse of which it would not be easy for me to show the falsehood.

Ang. Yes, I confess that I am in the wrong, and that you have reason to complain. But I beg of you, I beseech you, not now to expose me to the anger of my parents, and to let me in quickly.

Dan. I would see you far enough first.

Ang. There is a dear good husband! I implore you, do!

Dan. A dear good husband, am I! I am your dear good husband now, because you are caught. I am very glad of it; but you never took it into your head to say these sweet things before.

Ang. There; I promise never again to give you any cause for displeasure, and to . . .

Dan. All that does not signify. I will not lose this opportunity; and I am determined that the world shall know thoroughly your misconduct this time.

Ang. For mercy's sake, let me speak to you. I pray you for a moment's hearing.

Dan. Well! what is it?

Ang. It is true, I have been at fault; I admit it once again, and that your resentment is just; that I have taken advantage of your sleep to slip out: and that I went out to keep an appointment with the person whom you know. But after all, these are actions which you ought to pardon at my age; the follies of a young woman who has had no experience, and has but just entered the world; liberties to which one gives way, without thinking of any harm, and which, in reality, have nothing . . .

Dan. Ay: as you say, these are things in which one ought to have implicit faith.

Ang. I do not wish to pretend by this, that I am without blame towards you; and I only entreat of you to forget an offence for which I heartily beg your pardon, and to spare me, for this once only, the vexation of the severe reproaches of my father and mother. If you will generously grant me the favour which I ask from you, your obliging conduct, your kindness towards me, will win me over entirely; it will thoroughly touch my heart, and produce there for you what neither the authority of my parents nor the bonds of marriage have been able to instil into it. In short, it will cause me to renounce all gallantries, and to be attached solely to you. Yes, I pledge my word, that henceforth I will be the best wife in the world to you, and that I will show you so much affection, yes, so much, that you will be satisfied.

Dan. Ah! you crocodile, that flatters people to strangle them![27]

Ang. Grant me this favour.

Dan. Not a jot. I am inexorable.

Ang. Show yourself generous.

Dan. No.

Ang. For pity's sake!

Dan. Not at all.

Ang. I implore you with all my heart.

Dan. No, no, no. I wish them to be undeceived about you, and that your disgrace may be made public.

Ang. Very well! if you drive me to despair, I warn you that a woman, in that condition, is capable of every-

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[27] In the eleventh scene of *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé* (see Vol. VI.), one of Molière's earliest farces, which he played in the provinces, the Barbouillé says almost the same thing to his wife, who is also called Angélique.

thing, and that I shall do something of which you shall repent.[28]

Dan. And what will you do, pray?

Ang. I shall be driven to the most desperate resolution; and with this knife shall I kill myself on the spot.[29]

Dan. Ha! ha! Well and good.

Ang. Not so well and good as you imagine. People are acquainted, on all hands, with our quarrels and the perpetual ill-will which you foster against me. When they find me dead, no one will doubt that you have killed me; and, certainly, my parents are not the people to leave my death unpunished, and they will punish you to the utmost extent which the law and the heat of their resentment will allow. That is the way in which I shall find means to be revenged upon you; and I am not the first who has had recourse to that kind of vengeance; and who has not scrupled to take her own life, in order to destroy those who had the cruelty to drive her to this last extremity.

Dan. I am not to be caught in that way. People no longer kill themselves; and the fashion has gone out long since.

Ang. You may rely upon my doing it; and if you persist in your refusal, if you do not let me in, I swear to you that I shall immediately show you how far the resolution of a desperate woman will go.

Dan. Nonsense, nonsense. You wish to frighten me.

Ang. Very well! since it must be, this will content us both, and will show whether I am jesting. [*After having pretended to kill herself*] Ah! it is done. Heaven grant that my death may be avenged as I wish, and that he

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[28] Angélique, in the eleventh scene of *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé*, says nearly the same thing.

[29] This is also said by Angélique in *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé*.

who is the cause of it may receive a just chastisement for his cruelty towards me!

Dan. Good gracious! can she have been malicious enough to kill herself to get me hanged? Let us take a bit of candle to go and see.[30]

SCENE IX.

ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

Ang. Hush! keep still. Let us place ourselves immediately, one on each side of the door.

SCENE X.

ANGÉLIQUE *and* CLAUDINE, *entering the house as soon as George Dandin comes out, and immediately bolting the door inside;* GEORGE DANDIN, *with a candle in his hand, without perceiving them.*

Dan. Can the wickedness of a woman go as far at that? [*Alone, after looking everywhere*] There is no one here. Well! I thought so; and the hussy is gone away, finding that she could gain nothing from me, either by prayers or threats. So much the better! it will make matters still worse for her; and her father and mother will see her crime all the more plainly when they come. [*After having been at his door, to go in*] Ah! ah! the door has fallen to. Hullo! ho! some one! open the door for me quickly!

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[30] Angélique's last remark and Dandin's reply are, with some variations, found also in *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé.* (See Vol. VI.) In the old fabliaux, there is a tale similar to George Dandin (See Introductory Notice); but the woman, in order to frighten her husband, throws a big stone into a well.

SCENE XI.

ANGÉLIQUE *and* CLAUDINE, *at the window,* GEORGE DANDIN.

Ang. What! is it you? Where have you been, you wretch? Is this a time to come home, when it is nearly daybreak? and is this the life which an honest husband ought to lead?

Clau. A pretty thing to go about drinking all night, and to leave a poor young creature of a wife by herself at home?

Dan. What! you have . . .

Ang. Get along, you wretch, get along; I am sick of your goings-on, and I will complain of them, without delay, to my father and mother.

Dan. What! You dare to . . .

SCENE XII.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, *in their night-gowns,* COLIN, *carrying a lantern,* ANGÉLIQUE *and* CLAUDINE *at the window,* GEORGE DANDIN.

Ang. [*To M. and Madam de Sotenville*] Pray come here to protect me against the most consummate insolence of a husband, whose brain has been so muddled by wine and jealousy that he no longer knows what he is saying or doing, and has himself sent for you to make you witnesses of the most extravagant behaviour you ever heard of. This is how he comes back, as you may see, after making me wait all night for him; and were you to listen to him, he will tell you that he has the greatest complaints to make against me; that, while he was asleep, I left his side to go gadding about, and a hundred other stories of the same nature, which he has taken into his head.

Dan. [*Aside*] There is a wicked strumpet!

Clau. Yes, he wishes to make out that he was in the house, and that we were outside; and it is a fancy which we cannot drive out of his head.

M. de S. How now! What means all this?

Mad. de S. Here is a confounded impudence, to send for us.

Dan. Well I never . . .

Ang. No, father, I can no longer put up with such a husband: my patience is exhausted; and he has been saying all manner of insulting words to me.

M. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Zounds! you are a vile fellow.

Clau. It is pity to see a poor young wife treated in such a fashion; it cries to Heaven for vengeance.

Dan. Can any one . . .

M. de S. You ought to die with shame.

Dan. Allow me to say two words.

Ang. Only listen to him: he will tell you something pretty!

Dan. [*Aside*] I give it up in despair.

Clau. He has drunk so much, that there is no staying near him; and the scent of the wine which he exhales comes up even to us.

Dan. Sir father-in-law, I implore you . . .

M. de S. Withdraw: your breath smells offensively of wine.[31]

[31] Chamfort, in his *Eloge de la Fontaine*, says justly: "Who represents best the effects of prejudice: M. de Sotenville, saying to a man who has not been taking a drop of wine, "Withdraw, your breath smells offensively of wine," or the Bear (in La Fontaine's fable of *The Bear and the two Comrades*), who, in taking a living, but sleeping, man for a corpse, says to himself, "Let us go away, for he smells?" Compare Congreve's *The Way of the World* (iv., 10 and 11), where Mrs Millamant says to Lady Wishfort, "Your pardon, Madam, I can stay no longer; Sir Wilful grows very powerful. Eh! how he smells, I shall be overcome, if I stay." And Lady Wishfort replying, "Smells! He would poison a tallow-chandler and his family." But Sir Wilful Witwould is really intoxicated.

Dan. I pray you, Madam . . .

Mad. de S. Away! do not come near me; your breath is filthy.

Dan. [*To M. de Sotenville*] Allow me to . . .

M. de S. Withdraw: I tell you, there is no bearing you.

Dan. [*To Mad. de Sotenville*] For pity's sake, let me . . .

Mad. de S. Fie upon it! you make me sick. Speak if you will, but at a distance.

Dan. Very well, then, I will speak at a distance. I swear to you that I have not stirred out of the house, and that it was she who went out.

Ang. Did I not tell you so?

Clau. You see how likely that is.

M. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Go, you are jesting with people. Descend, daughter, and come here.

SCENE XIII.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

Dan. I take Heaven to witness that I was in the house, and that . . .

M. de S. Hold your tongue; this extravagance is unbearable.

Dan. May a thunderbolt strike me on the spot, if . . .

M. de S. Do not pester my head any longer, but rather think of asking your wife's pardon.

Dan. I! ask pardon?

M. de S. Yes, pardon, and immediately.

Dan. What! I . . .

M. de S. Zounds! if you answer me, I shall teach you what it is to make fools of us.

Dan. Ah! George Dandin!

SCENE XIV.

M. *and* MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN,[32]

M. de S. Come hither, daughter, that your husband may ask your pardon.

Ang. I! pardon him all that he has said to me? No, no, father, I cannot possibly make up my mind to it; and I beg of you to separate me from a husband with whom I can no longer live.

Clau. How can she bear it!

M. de S. Such separations, daughter, are not brought about without a great deal of scandal; and you should show yourself wiser than he, and be patient once more.

Ang. How can I be patient after such indignities? No, father, I cannot consent to it.

M. de S. You must, daughter; I command you.

Ang. This word stops my mouth. You have absolute authority over me.

Clau. What gentleness!

Ang. It is vexatious to have to overlook such insults; but, whatever violence I may do to my feelings, it is my duty to obey you.

Clau. Poor lamb!

M. de S. [*To Angélique*] Draw near.

Ang. Whatever you may make me do will be of no use; we shall have to recommence to-morrow, you will see.

M. de S. We shall put a stop to it. [*To George Dandin*] Come! go down on your knees.

Dan. On my knees?

M. de S. Yes, on your knees, and without delay.

Dan. [*Kneeling with a candle in his hands*] [*Aside*] Oh Heavens! [*To M. de Sotenville*] What am I to say?

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[32] See Appendix, Note G.

M. de S. Madam, I beg of you to pardon me. . . .

Dan. Madam, I beg of you to pardon me. . . .

M. de S. The folly I have committed. . . .

Dan. The folly I have committed. . . . [*Aside*] of marrying you.

M. de S. And I promise you to behave better for the future.[33]

Dan. And I promise you to behave better for the future.

M. de S. [*To George Dandin*] Take care, and remember that this is the last of your impertinences that we shall endure.

Mad. de S. By the Heavens above us! if you try them again, you shall be taught the respect due to your wife, and to those from whom she is descended.

M. de S. The day is breaking. Farewell. [*To George Dandin*] Go in, and learn to behave better. [*To Madam de Sotenville*] And we, love, let us go to bed.

SCENE XV.

GEORGE DANDIN, *alone.*

Ah! I give it up altogether, and I can see no help for it. When one has married, as I have done, a wicked wife, the best step which one can take is to go and throw one's self into the water, head foremost.

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[33] In former times, criminals were sometimes legally condemned to ask pardon publicly. This was called *amende honorable.* The culprit was in his shirt, with a burning torch in one hand, kneeling, and with a rope round his neck. George Dandin, half-undressed, with his candle, and on his knees, gives no bad idea of such an exhibition.

APPENDIX.

A, Page 350.

Dibdin, in his *Metamorphoses*, has imitated the second scene of the first act of Molière's *George Dandin*, who in the English play is called Don Pedro, whilst Lubin becomes Perez.

PEREZ *for sometime does not regard him.*

Don Pedro. Truly I doubt of everything, there 's such a confounded running in and out. Juletta is so impertinent, and Marcella so haughty, that I am afraid this consenting to marry me was only a pretence to get her fortune out of my hands. . . . Well, a very short time will now put the matter out of dispute, and in the meanwhile I 'll be my own porter, and let everybody in and out—— Hey, who have we here?

Perez. How that man eyes me.

Don P. He looks mighty suspicious, methinks.

Per. He does not know me, sure.

Don P. What can he be doing so near my house?

Per. Why, he is not watching, sure, to see who goes in and out, is he?

Don P. I 'll speak to him.

Per. He comes this way.

Don P. If he is one of their spies, I must go cunningly to work.

Per. Let him be who he will, he shan't get anything out of me.

Don. P. Your servant, friend.

Per. Yours, friend.

Don P. What makes you watching about this house so, eh?

Per. Hush.

Don P. What d' ye mean?

Per. Hold your tongue, I tell you?

Don P. Why must I hold my tongue?

Per. You must not tell a living soul that you saw me watching about this house.

Don P. Oh! I must not.

Per. Not for the world; if it should come to Don Pedro's knowledge, laud a mercy! what a work would there be.

Don P. Oh, ho! I guess how the matter is: what, you are standing centinel to watch their motions within.

Per. Why, how the devil shou'd you know that?

Don P. Ah! you see I'm in all your secrets. . . . I know, too, that you went to get an answer to the letter that you delivered two days ago to Juletta, for her mistress.

Per. No: there you are out—'twas yesterday morning I deliver'd the letter, and she herself brought my master an answer not an hour ago.

Don P. So, so! why then Don Pedro is finely imposed upon.

Per. Imposed upon! why, what is such an old fool good for, but to be imposed upon; I can tell you, he must look sharp, or we shall run away with this delicate morsel from him, as sure as he thinks himself of it. You don't know him, do you?

Don P. Never saw him in my life.

Per. I wish you did, for I'm sure you'd laugh at him every time you set eyes on him. . . . Well, I'll stay hereabout, and don't you, now, drop a word of what I have told you.

Don P. Me! no, I enjoy it, I assure you.

Per. I daresay you do; every body must easily suppose how agreeable it is to trick such an old covetous curmudgeon.

Don P. Oh! you may depend upon it, not a word shall escape me.

Per. That's right; we can't be too cautious; you understand me?

Don P. Oh! perfectly—confound you!

Per. These are not matters to blab to everybody; you apprehend me?

Don P. Clearly—an Alguzile apprehend you.

Per. Well now, keep my counsel, and when we meet again I'll tell you how my master has sped.

Don P. The devil speed him.

Per. Now. [*Exit.*

Don P. I warrant you.

B, Page 353.

Betterton, in *The Amorous Widow* (Act iii. Scene 2), has imitated Molière's *George Dandin* (Act i. Scene 4) as follows. Mr. and Madam de Sotenville are called Sir Peter and Lady Pride; and George Dandin, Barnaby Brittle.

Enter SIR PETER PRIDE *and* LADY PRIDE.

Sir Peter Pride. You seem disorder'd, Son-in-law.

Brittle. And I have reason to be so, if ever any man had. [*Walks to and fro in a hurry.*

Lady Pride. Good lack! and why so short, Son-in-law?

Brit. I shall grow taller in a little time, good Mother-in-law, if this Trade holds. [*Points to his head.*

Sir P. Explain your meaning, Son-in-law.

Brit. 'T will explain itself shortly. [*Walks up and down.*

Lady P. What, is that Hat of yours nail'd on? Do you know who you are? And the Respect due to Persons of our Quality, good Son-in-law?

Brit. Ah! wou'd I did not; but now I know to my Sorrow, since you will have me speak, good Mother-in-law.

Lady P. Will you never leave that saucy Word, of calling me Mother-in-law!

Brit. Good Lord! why what must I call you, then?

Lady P. You ought to say, Madam and Sir, when you speak to us; or when you speak of us, you should say Sir Peter and her Ladyship. For tho' you have married our Daughter, yet there is a great deal of distinction betwixt you and Persons of our Rank and Quality.

Sir P. Go to, it is enough for me to let him know his Duty, without your Instructions. Sure, I best know myself what to do. Son-in-law, you are an Impudent Fellow to use us at that rate, How often must we put you in mind of your Duty and Respect, e'er you'll know it? Henceforward learn to behave yourself as you ought, or you shall hear on't in other sort of Terms. You must not think because you've married our Daughter that we will be satisfied with such indifferent Ceremonies and Duty you might have paid had you married one equal with yourself; nor ought you indeed to say, your Wife, when you speak of our Daughter.

Brit. Good lack! is not your Daughter my Wife?

Sir P. She is, but you ought not to call her so.

Brit. I know that too well, now 'tis too late. I'd give a thousand Pounds she were not my Wife.

Sir P. At it again? I tell you, tho' you have married her, yet, as she is our Daughter, you must not treat her after that familiar way.

Brit. You make me mad. Is not my Wife my Wife?

Sir P. I tell you, tho' she be your Wife, you must not call her so. When you speak of her, as being our Daughter, you must say Madam.

Brit. Well, Madam, then, since it must be Madam, I did not care if she were a Dutchess, so I were but fairly rid of her. Here's such a stir about your Gentility, and your Honour; but I believe if I had not married your Daughter, and with my good money redeem'd your Estate, your Gentility had been left in the Mud, for all your great Families and your nice Honour.

Sir P. Then do you think it no Honour to be ally'd to the Worshipful Family of *Pride's*.

Lady P. And to the Honourable Family of the *Laycocks?* Go, Clown. 'Tis a shame our Daughter should be wedded to such a brute. We have been told at what a rate you treat her. What is the Reason of it, Son-in-law?

Brit. Why, you shall know, good Mother-in-law. How——

Lady P. Again at that affronting way! How often have you been told to say Madam?

Brit. Well, Madam, then: I always forget these fine Words. But Madam, if you wou'd please, Madam, to hear me speak, you shall know, Madam, whether I have not cause to wish I never had seen my Wi— your Daughter, Madam, if I must call her nothing else.

Sir P. Well, Sir, proceed.

Brit. Why, in the first Place, I am in a fair way to be made a Cuckold, if I am not one already.

Sir P. How, Son-in-law? Have a care what you say.

Brit. Believe me what I say, I can make appear——

Sir P. Do it then presently.

Brit. Why, she has just now received a letter from her Gallant, and made an Appointment to meet him this Evening; and judge how small a time a Pair of Horns are a grafting.

Sir P. How came you to know this, Son-in-law?

Brit. Why, just now. I caught the Fellow that brought her the Letter coming out of my House, and, not knowing who I was, I got out of him all the Business; and that his master, Mr *Lovemore*——

Sir P. Is that the Gentleman's Name?

Brit. Yes, so his Man told me. I have often seen him taking a View of my House, and looking up to the Windows; and 't is plain what his designs were.

Lady P. If this be true, I 'll tear her eyes out.

Sir P. Nay, if it be, this good Sword (never yet drawn in vain) shall do you Right. Where is she, Son-in-law?

Brit. Within, I 'll warrant, studying what Excuse to make to get abroad and meet her Gallant.

Lady P. I 'll call her to answer for herself. Be sure you wrong her not, Son-in-law. [*Exit Lady Pride.*

Brit. Nay, nay, I make no doubt but she is to be believ'd before me; and she ne'er wants cunning to bring herself off, I 'll say that for her, tho' the case be ne'er so plain.

Sir P. By this good Light, if she dares be false to her Marriage Vows, she dies; and that base Rifler of her Fame shall bear her Company.

Brit. Oh! Here he comes, that Spoiler of my Honour; that's he.

C, Page 358.

The fifth Scene of the first Act of Molière's *George Dandin* is imitated as follows by Betterton, in his *Amorous Widow* (Act iii., Scene 3). Clitandre is, in the English play, called Lovemore.

Enter LOVEMORE, Sir PETER *meets him. They stare each other i' th' face.*

Sir Peter. Do you know who I am, Sir?

Lovemore. I don't well remember I ever had much acquaintance with you.

Sir P. I am call'd Sir *Peter Pride.*

Love. It may: I've heard of you, Sir.

Sir P. My Family, Sir, has stood these many years with unblemish'd Fame and Honour.

Love. Very likely, Sir.

Sir P. How far you have endeavour'd to stain that Fame be judge yourself.

Love. Pray, Sir, explain this Riddle.

Sir P. I have a Daughter, young, fair, well-bred, has sense; she is indeed the wonder of her Sex; and this man, whom you see here, has the Honour to be married to her.

Brit. Ah! 'Tis an Honour that I cou'd have spar'd. [*Aside.*

Sir P. Now, Sir; I'm told, that you endeavour to corrupt her Honour, and defile her Marriage-Bed. Sir, I have had the Honour to command abroad, and with Success, both to my King and my Country,—as have also the Chief Part of all our great Race; even from *William the Conqueror*, to this present Reign, have our unquestion'd Glories stood a Pattern to our yet rising Fame. And he who dares presume to rob us of that precious Jewel, Honour, must not think to 'scape unpunish'd, tho' with the Hazard o' th' last Drop of Blood, that is left, to wash off the Stain. My Daughter's Honour, Sir, is as dear to me as this vital Air, by which I breathe and live.

Love. Pray, Sir, who told you this?

Sir P. Believe me, Sir, whate'er I say, I can quote my Author for it.

Love. Then whoever told you is a Rascal; and were he here, I'd ram the Lie down his Throat, or make him eat a Piece of my Sword.

Sir P. Why he told me——This man——her Husband here justified it to my Face, and said he had Proof.

Love. How, Sir! Did you frame this abominable Falsehood? 'Tis well you have the Honour to be ally'd to this worthy Knight, Sir *Peter Pride*, here; or you should know what it is to father such a Lie upon a man of my Reputation.

Sir P. Oh! here comes my Daughter.

D, Page 360.

Betterton, in *The Amorous Widow* (Act iii., Scene 4), has imitated, as follows, the sixth Scene of the first Act of Molière's *George Dandin*. Angélique is Mrs Brittle.

Enter Lady PRIDE, Mrs BRITTLE, *and* DAMARIS.

Love. Did you, Madam, tell your Husband a strange story, that I should make love to you, and endeavour'd to corrupt your Honour?

Mrs Brittle. I tell him! Why, when did you make Love to me, Sir? I assure you, had you let me know of your Passion, it shou'd not have gone unrewarded. Pray, next time you send, let it be one that knows how to take more care. However, you have no great Reason to despair; for since he complains without any manner of Reason, I am resolv'd he shall have Cause. Therefore, if you do love me, Sir, pray let me know it, and I do assure you, you shall not want Encouragement. He shall not use me at this rate for nothing.

Love. Madam, believe me, 'tis all a Riddle to me; for, till this Hour, I never heard anything mentioned like it. I am an absolute Stranger to it.

Lady P. Do you hear that, you Clown? Are you not asham'd to abuse a Gentlewoman continually, without any cause?

Sir P. What is the meaning of this, Son-in-law?

Brit. Pray do but hear me.

Sir P. Troth, Son-in-law, you are a very impudent Fellow.

Brit. Hear me but speak?

Sir P. You shall not speak. We have heard too much already.

Mrs B. I am sure *Damaris* knows I never have anybody come near me, but such as himself; nor ever receiv'd any Message, either by Letter or otherwise. I never committed any Crime against him, that I know of, unless sitting by myself all Day, and poring over two or three good Books be an Offence. Speak, *Damaris*, did I ever give him any Cause for these Suspicions, and this Usage? Thou know'st all I say or do.

Dam. Madam, I know no Reason; nor can I bear to see the Hardship you endure! Like a barbarous Man as he is——To abuse so good a Lady! so Virtuous, so Innocent, and so Pious a Lady! I am sure it makes me weep to think on't——I am afraid he'll break her Heart in a little time, if—— [*Weeps.*

Brit. Hold your Tongue, you Jade, or I'll make you feel my double Fist. You are not a Gentlewoman——I may do what I please with you.

Mrs B. Oh, my dear father! [*Cries*] I am not able to endure this any longer. Never was any Woman abus'd as I am. I beg you will do me Justice, for I can bear it no longer. [*Exit, crying.*

Lady P. Damaris, let's follow her, and endeavour to comfort her Oh, thou Clown, to use a Gentlewoman with so much Cruelty!

Dam. I fear he'll be the Death of her at one time or another.

[*Exeunt* Lady Pride *and* Damaris.

Sir P. What do you think of all this, Sir? Are not you a very pretty Fellow? Come hither, Son-in-law, ask this Gentleman Pardon, for the Affront you have put upon him in belying of him.

Brit. How! ask his Pardon, that would have made me a Cuckold.

Love. Sir Peter, pray——

Sir P. I say no more Words. He has wronged a Gentleman; and the least he can do is begging Pardon.

Brit. 'Tis very well! He offends, and I must ask Pardon.

Sir P. No matter for that, you hear he denies it; and 'tis enough, if a Gentleman unsays what he has said.

Brit. So that, if I catch him making me a Cuckold, and he denies it, I must not believe it, because a Gentleman said it.

Sir P. I say, you shall ask Pardon. Therefore, no more Words, but do't.

Brit. I shall run mad. Well, what must I do?

Sir P. Come hither. Take your Hat off——Kneel down, and say after me.

Brit. Well, since it must be so——[*Kneels*] This 'tis to be marry'd to a Gentlewoman, forsooth.

Sir P. Sir, I ask your Pardon.

Brit. Sir, I ask your Pardon. [*In the same tone.*

Sir P. For the Affront I have put upon you.

Brit. For the Affront I have put upon you.

Sir P. By falsely accusing you——

Brit. How! falsely accusing him!

Sir P. I say no more Words. Say after me.

Brit. Say after me.

Sir P. Accusing you, of having a Design to corrupt my Wife's Honour.

Brit. Accusing you of Truth——And having a Design to corrupt my Wife's Honour.

Sir P. For which, knowing myself in the wrong, I do ask your Pardon.

Brit. For which, knowing myself not in the wrong, I'm forc'd to ask your Pardon.

Love. Well, Sir, upon Sir *Peter Pride's* Account I am content to pass it by this Time. But let me hear no more Complaints.

[*Brittle rises and runs off.*

Sir P. Sir, now all is well, I humbly take my leave. [*Exit Sir Peter.*

Love. Was there ever such a lucky Rogue as I? For her to encourage me to make Love to her before her Husband's Face! Nay, and before her Father and Mother too!

E, Page 372.

Dibdin, in his *Metamorphoses* (Act ii.), has imitated Molière's seventh Scene of the second Act of *George Dandin*, who is called Don Pedro in the English play; Lubin's name is Perez.

Perez. [*Looking about*] I thought to have my master and Fabio here.

Don P. Oh! yonder's my communicative friend. . . . I'll try if I can't come at some more of their secrets.

Perez. Oh, you're there, Mr Tittle Tattle, are you, to whom I gave such a charge not to speak a word? . . . You must go and tell everybody, must you?

Don P. I!

Perez. Yes, you! you told old Pedro every word I intrusted you with, and he has made such a clatter about it. . . .

Don P. I do assure you . . .

Perez. No, no, I won't hear a word. . . . You'll never get anything from me again, I promise you.

Don P. But, friend——

Perez. I tell you, I'll have nothing to say to you——if you had not betray'd me, I wou'd have told you what was doing now.

Don P. Why, is there anything doing now?

Perez. Not that you will be the better for, I can tell you that.

Don P. I'm not afraid, faith! . . . but, prythee now——

Perez. Ay, you see what you get by tattling; you shall hear no more; good bye, I'll leave you with your mouth watering.

Don P. Nay, but stay a little.

Perez. What! you want to pump something else out of me, do you?

Don P. No, I have no curiosity at all.

Perez. Ah, you may spell, but it will be all to no purpose. . . . I'm a faithful servant, and whoever says to the contrary, tells stories. . . . Perhaps you may expect to hear from me that my master and fellow-servant were singing ballads under the old fellow's window, . . . but it will be long enough before I shall be such a fool.

Don P. Oh, dare say!

Perez. Or may be you expect that I have so little prudence as to tell you that they are going to disguise themselves like two friars, . . . but you won't get a word out of little Perez.

Don P. That's easily seen.

Perez. No, no, I'm not such an ass that comes to.

Don P. Nay, now——

Perez. Not a syllable; I don't want you to make any more mischief. [*Exit.*

F, Page 376.

Molière's tenth Scene of the second Act of *George Dandin* is thus imitated by Betterton in *The Amorous Widow* (Act iv., Scene 4). Claudine is called, in the English play, Damaris.

Scene *changes to a Chamber, and discovers* LOVEMORE, MRS BRITTLE, *and* DAMARIS.

Lovemore. You question your own Power, when you mistrust my Honour, Madam. Such Charms can never want Force to allay all thoughts of wronging so much Goodness.

Mrs Brittle. Well, Sir, I do believe you to be a Man of Honour, and hope you will not wrong my good Opinion.

Enter SIR PETER, LADY PRIDE *and* BRITTLE, *behind them. They grow enrag'd to see 'em together, and make signs of Revenge.* SIR PETER *lays his hand upon his Sword.*

Therefore meet me this Evening at the Garden-Door about Nine, and there we'll discourse farther: If I find what you say be real, perhaps I may be prevail'd upon to venture farther.

Love. Madam, you bless me! [*Kisses her Hand.*

Mrs B. Have a little Patience——Let's draw nearer, and hear what they say. [*They go nearer.*

Damaris. Oh Madam! Madam! my Master, Sir *Peter*, and my Lady, are just behind you.

Mrs B. Ha! undone for ever.

Love. What will become of me then?

Mrs B. Let me alone to bring it off. [*To* Love. *Aside.*] Be not you surpris'd at any thing I say, but seem to humour it. I'll have no more. [*Seems to be angry with* Lovemore.] What do you tell me of your being amazed! Did you ever see anything in me that could encourage you to believe I was that Woman you took me for? I'll warrant you thought, because I seem'd to give you Encouragment before my Husband yesterday, when he had enrag'd me, that I was in earnest. [*They overhear, seem angry, and to threaten* Brittle, *who pretends by signs to excuse himself.*

Love. What mean you, Madam? [*Confusedly.*

Mrs B. But you will find youself deceiv'd: For tho' my Husband gives me Provocations to use him at any rate, yet, Sir, I'd have you to know, I scorn Revenge; and will not be brib'd to stain my Honour, tho' all the Wealth of the whole World were laid at my Feet.

Lady. Do you hear that, Son-in-law!

[*They still threaten, he looks sneakingly.*

Mrs B. No, Sir, my honourable Parents brought me up with the strictest Care; taught me the nice Paths that lead to everlasting Fame

and Glory: And he who dares attempt to make me lose my Way, deserves to be us'd thus, thus, and thus, Sir. [*Gets near Sir Peter, snatches his cane and runs at Lovemore, who gets behind* Brittle. *She beats Brittle unmercifully, while Lovemore gets off.*

Brit. Oh, Hold! Hold! What, will you murder me?

[*Brittle rubs his Shoulders.*

Sir Peter. Troth, Son-in-law, she serv'd you right.

Lady P. You have not half what you deserve; And I could find in my Heart to——

Sir P. Let him alone. I'll correct him. Son-in-law, you are a very impudent Fellow to use your Wife thus. What can you say for yourself. [*Feels his Arms and Head.*

Brit. Say for myself! Why, I say 'tis all a Trick—And a Contrivance to blind the Matter.

Sir P. Is it not plain, you have wrong'd her? Do you not see she is a virtuous and good Wife?

Lady P. Too good for him, a Clown.

Brit. Well, well, I am overreach'd, I see.

Sir P. Son-in-law, I charge you let me hear no more of this. And instantly ask your Wife's Pardon.

Brit. How, Sir?

Mrs B. Oh! let him alone, 'twill be to no Purpose. I'm a little out of Order. *Damaris,* Lead me to my Chamber.

[*Exeunt with Damaris.*

Sir P. I say follow her, and ask her Pardon.

Brit. If I do, the Curse of Cuckoldom fall upon me.

[*Runs out another way.*

Lady P. Ah, graceless Clown. Come, Sir *Peter,* let's follow, and see how she does.

G, Page 395.

Betterton, in *The Amorous Widow* (Act v., Scene 3), has thus imitated scenes eight to fourteen of the third act of Molière's *George Dandin.*

BRITTLE *at the window above.*

Brittle. Jeremy! Jeremy! [*In their Tone.*

Damaris. Oh, Madam, my Master!

Mrs Brittle. Lost! Undone for ever!

Brit. Ah! Ha! my sweet Lady! Have I caught you at last? Jeremy! Jeremy! Where has your sweet Ladyship been, I pray, that you are so afraid of being discover'd? Come, I know you have a Lie in readiness: Let's have it.

Mrs B. Nowhere but just with *Damaris,* to take a little of the fresh Air; that's all, indeed, sweet Husband.

Brit. To take the fresh Air, quotha! Ah, I rather believe 'twas to take a Heat, you Witch you.

Mrs B. Pray Husband, let the Door be open'd?

Brit. No, you shall stay there till your Parents come. I have sent for them. They shall see what Hours you keep. And know of your Gallant you just parted from, your vigorous Lover.

Dam. Madam, he overheard all, and we are undone. [*Aside to her.*

Brit. What have you no Excuse ready? No Invention? You and your wicked Instrument there, that stands like the Serpent at *Eve's* Elbow, to tempt her to sin. What, is your Prompter to Wickedness dumb? I'd fain hear how you intend to excuse it.

Mrs B. I don't go about to excuse it, Husband————

Brit. No: That's because you don't know how.

Mrs B. I do confess, I have been to meet a Gentleman, but not alone; *Damaris* was with me. And sure there was no Crime in a little harmless Chat.

Brit. No, no, not in the least; making me a Cuckold is no Harm at all.

Mrs B. Pray, Husband, let me in, and I'll never do the like again, as long as I live; but you shall henceforward find me the most dutiful Wife that you could wish for. Pray, Husband, trust me but this once.

Brit. No.

Mrs B. Do not disgrace me to my Parents, by exposing me at this unseasonable Hour, in which I do confess I am much to blame——

Brit. Oh! Do you so?

Mrs B. But forgive me now. I'll never do it again.

Brit. Hang them that believes you, I say.

Mrs B. I am sure I never injur'd you in all my Life; but am as innocent as the Child unborn, from doing the Ill which you suspect.

Brit. It may be so; 'Twas not your Fault then.

Mrs B. Pray, dear Husband, believe me, and let me in.

Brit. No.

Mrs B. On my Knees I ask your Pardon, do but open the Door.

Brit. No.

Mrs B. If you let me in this Time, 'twill work upon me more than all the Liberty in the World cou'd do beside.

Brit. I care not.

Mrs B. Indeed, Husband, I love you dearly, and love you only. How can you then be so cruel to refuse me?

Brit. Ah, cunning Crocodile? Now you are caught, 'tis dear Husband, sweet Husband, 'tis only you I love. But at another Time, 'tis good for nothing old Fool. No, no, I know you well enough, and so shall your Parents now.

Mrs B. Pray, Husband, let the Door be open'd.

Brit. No.

Mrs B. Try me but this once.

Brit. I tell you, no.

Mrs B. Not once more ?

Brit. No.

Mrs B. If you provoke me, I may despair, grow desperate, and do a Deed, which you may repent.

Brit. Good lack ! what will your sweet Ladyship do ?

Mrs B. I'll kill myself with this Knife here. [*Shows her Fan.*

Brit. Oh, very well !

Mrs B. Nay, 'twill not be so well as you imagine neither. Everybody knows how ill we have liv'd, and when I'm dead, People will think you murder'd me.

Brit. Ay !

Mrs B. Therefore I'll kill myself to have my Death reveng'd upon you.

Brit. Odd, I'll trust to that. Besides, killing one's self has been a great while out of Fashion. But why don't you dispatch ? Methinks you are long about it.

Mrs B. You may believe me, for I'll certainly do it if you persist.

Brit. Odd, I'll venture it.

Mrs B. Besides, when I am dead, my Ghost shall haunt you.

Brit. Ay, if I cou'd but once get rid of your Person here, I should not fear your Ghost hereafter.

Mrs B. Have you no Pity left ? I am just going to do it.

Brit. And yet you are long about it.

Mrs B. Since nothing but my Death can satisfy you—there and there ! [*Pretends to stab herself with her Fan, and falls.*

Dam. Oh, she has don't ! she has don't ! Oh cruel, barbarous Monster to make her kill herself !

Mrs B. Now, Damaris, you find too late I did not jest ; I know thou'lt see my Death reveng'd upon my cruel Husband, who has accus'd me falsely ; for I affirm, with my dying Breath, I never wrong'd him. Farewell ! Death beckons me into a dark and gloomy Vale, where I must follow.

Dam. She's gone ! she's gone ! Oh, thou worse than Savage ! To murder so sweet a Lady, so innocent and so good ; nay, I'll swear you did it. [*Cries over her.*

Brit. I hear no Noise ! [*Looks frighten'd*] Is't possible the Devil shou'd be so great with her that she cou'd kill herself to be revenged on me ! But I'll light a Candle and go see. [*Goes from the Window.*

Mrs B. Now, Damaris, stand close in this Corner : Close, Close. [*They stand aside.*

Enter BRITTLE *with a Light ; they slip by him, go in and lock the door. He looks about.*

Brit. Ha, ha, ha ! I thought, indeed, how well she'd do it. Here's none of her ! she made me believe she kill'd herself, and the meanwhile

ran away; well, e'en let her go, I shall have this Satisfaction, her Parents shall be Witness of her Hours. I'll in and wait their Coming.

[*Goes to the Door, and finds it lock'd. Knocks.*

Mrs Brittle *and* Damaris *above at the Window where he was.*

Mrs B. Away, you idle Sot; is this a time of Night for an honest Man to come home in?

Dam. Go, go, you may be asham'd!

Brit. Why, have you the Impudence ——

[*Looks up, and sees 'em above.*

Mrs B. How many Nights am I forc'd to sit up to wait for his coming in? And he tells the World 'tis I am to blame. But now it shall be seen who's to blame and who not. My Father and Mother are coming, they shall see what Hours you keep ——

Brit. I confess I stand amaz'd at this Impudence.

Mrs B. They shall know all.

Brit. Why, have you the Face to deny ——

Mrs B. Go, go, I'll hear none of your impudent Excuses: you are drunk, you Sot, you Swine. But here comes my honourable Father and Mother.

Enter Sir PETER *and Lady* PRIDE.

I'm glad you are come to witness of what I still suffer by this ungrateful Usage of a cruel Husband. You see what Hours he keeps; every Night at the Tavern roaring with his Companions, whilst I am forc'd to sit at Home alone, waiting for his coming; and when he does come, he strait raves and abuses me at such a rate, that I am not able to endure it.

Brit. Why, was there ever such Impudence! I wish this Candle were in my Belly, if ——

Mrs B. I know what he'll say now, if you'll believe him; he'll tell you that I am still in the wrong, and 'tis I that have been out at this late hour, and as for his part, he has been within all this Evening, and knows nothing of all this Matter, not he. But I'll leave yourselves to judge if this is an Hour for an honest Husband to come home at.

Brit. Why, then may I never ——

Mrs B. You see he's so drunk he can hardly stand.

Lady P. Faugh! —— I smell him hither. He stinks of Liquors and Tobacco like a Tarpaulin, that has not been sober whilst his Twelve Months Pay wou'd last.

Brit. I tell you that I am not drunk, nor have I been out of my House.

Sir P. Stand farther off, I cannot bear the Scent of a Drunkard.

Mrs B. I told you he wou'd deny it.

Brit. I say that 'tis she that has been out just now, and with her Gallant, and therefore I sent for you, and that I have not been out of my Doors.

Mrs B. Do you hear him? But *Damaris* can justify I have not set my Foot over the Threshold since Daylight.

Dam. If she has, never believe me more. I can assure your Honours 'tis true, for I have not been out of her Company since he went out to the Tavern.

Mrs B. Therefore I do beseech you, good Father and Mother, to revenge my Cause, for I am not able to endure it any longer. If I do, you 'll never see me alive another week.

Brit. 'Tis a strange thing that she must be believed and I not. I tell you ——

Lady P. Stand further off. Faugh! what a Smell there 's about him. [*She goes across the Stage.*

Brit. Well then, I 'll stand farther off, if you will but hear me speak. [*Goes backward*] I shall say nothing but the Truth and what I can prove.

Sir P. Again at your Proofs and your idle Jealousies! Be dumb, Coxcomb; it were a good Deed to break your Head for sending this for us out of our Beds, and making Fools of us still. If you ever dare to do the like again, we 'll find a Means to handle you ——. If there be no Law (but cutting of Throats) to revenge these Affronts —— I say no more ——. But remember you are warn'd.

Brit. If you wou'd but let me tell why I sent for you ——

Sir P. We have heard and seen too much already. Therefore dare not to speak a Word more.

Mrs B. And is this all his Punishment?

Sir P. No, come down, and he shall ask your Pardon. 'Tis the least he can do.

Mrs B. 'Twill be to no purpose; when your Backs are turn'd, he'll be as bad again.

Sir P. I say no more Disputes, but do as I command. [*They come down from the Window*] Now, Son-in-law, kneel down and ask your Wife's Forgiveness.

Mrs B. Shall I forgive him; no, I desire to be divorc'd.

Lady P. Come, Daughter, I say you must pardon him.

Brit. Well, Madam, I 'll endeavour to obey you.

Sir P. Why don't you kneel, and do as I command?

Brit. Well, I find there 's no Remedy, she has over-reach'd me again, and I must submit. But I am resolv'd I 'll get rid of this Nooze, tho' I tuck myself up in another.

[*Sir Peter makes him kneel to his Wife.*

Sir P. Come, say after me. Madam, I ask your Pardon.

Brit. Madam, I ask your Pardon.

Sir P. For the Folly I have committed ——

Brit. For the Folly I have committed in marrying you.

Sir P. In my wild Suspicions.

Brit. In my wild Suspicions.

Sir P. Which I do declare were utterly false.

Brit. Which I do declare were utterly false.

Sir P. And that I swear never to do the like again.

Brit. And that I swear never to do the like again, if I were once unmarried.

Mrs B. Here—kiss the Book. [*Gives her Hand*] But if ever you do't again —— You see 'tis to no purpose to turn blaguard; if you do, I'll tame you. [*Aside, to him.*

END OF VOLUME FOURTH.

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